













# ENGLISH WRITERS.

VOL. I.—PART I.

VOL. I.—PT. I.



# ENGLISH WRITERS.

VOL. I.—PART I.

## CELTS AND ANGLO-SAXONS

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY SKETCH OF THE FOUR PERIODS  
OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

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## ERRATUM.

Page 189, line 20, for "bard" read "band.







# ENGLISH WRITERS.

## INTRODUCTION.

### *The Four Periods of English Literature.*

THE soul of Literature is the soul of man at work through his best mind under the conditions to which he is born, The true History of Literature. which are in part natural and unalterable, in part social and variable from age to age. In the literature of any people, we perceive, under all contrasts of form produced by variable social influences, the one national character from first to last.

The mind has, like the body, its physiognomy determined in some measure by climate and race. Between the minds of an Englishman and Frenchman, when most equal in moral worth and influence upon the world's advancement, as between their faces when most equal in beauty, there are strongly-marked and hereditary differences of expression. But the full mind of a nation is its literature; and we may be very sure that to a true history of the literature of any country must belong a distinct recognition of the national character that underlies it, gives coherence to it all, and throughout marks with strength its individuality.

On the surface of the true character of a literature lie manifest to every eye the frequent changes in the fashion of its utterance. There is a reason for the form as well as for the substance of every book man ever wrote; and a history of our Literature that does not even ask why there was an especially strong body of dramatists in the days of Elizabeth, why satire prevailed after the Restoration, why dramatists are now converted into novelists, overlooks nearly the most obvious part

of its work. Again, it is not only by conditions of society within a country itself that the form of its literature is modified from age to age. No land can be to itself a world. Neighbouring nations act and react strongly upon each other, and Englishmen, insular as they are called, have from the first been travellers and tourists actively observant of their neighbours' fashions. Whenever the literature of any country in Europe has for a time become stronger than that of its neighbours, its admitted strength has influenced them in a very marked degree; and nowhere has influence of this kind been more complete and general than in England, where the great epoch of Italian literature and the *siècle Louis Quatorze* establish two of the chief bends in the current of our literary history. To a fair account, then, of the literature of any land, and not only to a history of English Literature, discussion of its relations with the literature of surrounding countries is, to a certain extent, indispensable. A chronological series of authors' names, with biographical dates and extracts, has its use, of course; and so has a list of the affluents of a great river, with their measured lengths and their distances from one another,—nor is it also without use to produce bottles of water drawn from each. But if we are told nothing of the river's banks, or of the feeding-grounds of its affluents, but are left to infer what we can from the fact that one water is clear, another sandy, and another contains clay; if nothing is told us of the bluffs and mountain-chains that turn the main river's course, the valleys into which it pours, here rushing impetuously between rocky banks, there spread into a sluggish lake over the marsh-land, the stream may have been industriously measured, but it has not been surveyed.

Of no literature does there exist, or will there ever exist, from the hand of one man a complete survey. He who shall begin in his old age to write, what he may not then hope to complete—the true history of a Literature—must have lived long and tranquilly, much tried by various conflicts with the passions and prejudices that he has often overcome in others, but himself has never largely shared. Continued health of mind and body, an almost boundless range of daily study among books, freshening the gladness of his intercourse with many sorts of men, and quickening that habit of energeti

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action in affairs of moment which alone can make him read a man where the recluse reads print,—these are, indeed, needful preparations for his work. But grant him these, he must yet have a perceptive genius akin to that of Shakespeare, if he would really show not only the form and stir of mind in every generation, but also the individual mind's likeness of each writer whose genius he has to define. And after all, if the man lives who is able thus to write the History of any Literature, it is not a History of Literature that he writes.

Thus, since we are all very much left to the guidance of our own impressions, there are formed, and it is well for us The purpose of this book. that there should be formed, literary opinions diverse as the moods and life-relations out of which they spring. Here also we get at truth by much discussion, and here also it commonly happens that of two people who differ, neither is wrong, except in as far as each has mistaken part of a truth for the whole. In these volumes I desire to convey certain impressions as to the influence exerted upon writers by the mind and fashion of the times in which they lived. Such impressions lead, I believe, to a manner of generalization useful, at any rate to a student, for what little light it may throw on the course of English Literature. There can hardly be an opinion in these pages that has not already been formed for themselves by many educated readers; or if there should be here any view of the relations of men that has occurred before to nobody, doubtless it is singular because it is not true. All that I here propose is to unite and enforce some detached truths which have been often separately recognized, by such comment upon writers and their times as may serve to illustrate the spirit of English authorship in successive periods from its beginning to the present day. This book attempts no full and well-proportioned history. It has, at best, not the whole truth to offer. It represents only the individual impression that forms one side of an argument, and must not, therefore, have its part mistaken for a whole. Since its business happens to be with a generalization of the whole body of English Literature, it must needs include sketch of its subject; but it will be necessary that it should look now at home and now abroad, calling attention chiefly to those points in a great writer which are prominent

when he is seen only from the chosen point of view, that it should give also what in a formal literary history would be disproportionate prominence to writers now almost forgotten, men who were not stronger than their day, and through whom Southey had some reason for saying that the history of a literature might best be studied, though it would not best be told.

A true general notion of the sequence of our writers must lie in the minds of many readers who have been tolerably catholic in their taste for good reading. It will divide itself, as I hope to show in the first part of this book very generally, and in the subsequent four parts with some completeness of detail, into four periods, all alike English. There is a continuous expression of one national character refreshed and enlivened, but rather assured than changed as to its more substantial features, by help of the small number of influential Normans who became finally absorbed into the great body of the people. Upon historical accidents affecting to a most remarkable extent fashions of speech, and not upon changes of the fixed natural character, we must found the division of a History of English Literature into its four periods, namely:—

That of the Formation of the Language, ending with Chaucer ;

That of Italian Influence, felt even in Chaucer's day, but more fairly inaugurated by the "company of courtly makers" who preceded the age of Elizabeth ;

That of French Influence, of which the beginning is marked strongly by a change in the style of Dryden subsequent to the 'Annus Mirabilis ;'

And that of English Popular Influence, which was established gradually, but which should be dated from Defoe.

To the last-named there was added slight admixture of a German influence. The best period of German literature came in aid of the tendency to revert to what is usually called Saxon English, which had begun to live again when writers addressed more habitually the great body of the English people than the polite circle of fashionable patrons.

The student of English literature, then, should look for the characteristic mind of the nation underlying through all generations for more than a thousand years

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Literature.

The one mind  
in them all.

most distinct diversities of manner. Of every change of taste and style, marking a period, he should seek the origin in many influences—as of public events or struggles at home or abroad; of the personal character of the sovereign in days of patronage; of the humour of the sovereign's court, which would colour the humours of all lesser patrons; of the genius of great writers, or the fashionable extravagances of small writers who were at the time in high repute. But at every turn it is to be remembered that those superficial differences do not change the mind within. An honest, earnest man may in a day so accommodate himself to the taste of his company that—with the same meaning to express—for one he shall be a warm attacker of abuses, for another a calm moralist, for another a jester, for another a satirist, for another a retailer of flat small-talk; and with each companion he shall by change of mood have come into such honest sympathy that he shall have carried one and the same thought fairly home to all. Far more easy it is for the unity of a substantial English character to be maintained in variety of utterance by the different voices of many men, speaking at divers times, but always straight from English lips to English ears.

Yet another consideration has to be applied constantly to the study of a literature. It is the expression of the best mind of the country. But why so expressed? Sources of Literature. Books are produced either to uphold right for its own sake, or to procure credit and gain to their authors, or for the two reasons combined. The desire of gain never could mean more for any honest English author, if he were not rich—at any rate, down to the close of the last century—than labour for a livelihood; and if he were rich, it certainly was not by writing books that it would easily have occurred to anybody that he might increase his wealth. But the man without hereditary store, who gave his labour to his pen, has at all times been forced by the conditions of life to study how he might subsist by it. Money, that some affect to despise in the gross, means food, clothes, health—nay, the very lives—of wife and children; power to be honest, power to be just, power to be merciful. Common truths as these are, they help to make many things clear when fairly and habitually applied to the analysis of Literature.

Thus, for example, in the old British and Pagan or half-Pagan times there were men who sang deeds of a chief and his forefathers. The rude civilisation hardly gave birth to high spiritual aspirations, and there was no bread for an author except what he ate at the table of such a patron, paying for what he received with cunning words of flattery, and battle-songs to stir his master's followers to valour. The desire of gifts was never concealed by the bard. Thus Taliesin—in one of the few songs to Urien which may be as old as all pretend to be, and may really carry us back to the days when the Old Britons were contending against the invasion of the English (afterwards called in books the Anglo-Saxons)—Taliesin is very explicit to his master. "The broad spoils of the spear," he says, "are given to my fair song delivered before the bright smiling hero. The most resolute of chieftains is Urien. . . . Eagle of the land, very keen is thy sight. I have made a request for a mettled steed, the price of the spoils of Taliesin." The same ground for appreciation of the chieftain from whom came the minstrel's bread opens another of these songs, "Urien of the plain, most generous of baptized men; much has he bestowed on skilful men. Like to the heaping together of scattered corn is the abundance of Christian bards." In the earlier days of English possession, when Christianity had not yet touched the hearts of our forefathers, still the military chief was the sole patron by whom an author could be fed, and battle-stories pleasant to his ear were all the literature he would pay for.

Then followed the Christian days, when in the great monasteries there was a more peaceful life, with more honour and more assurance of bread to the scholar. The Church paid only for a religious literature. The earnest English mind (let us dismiss for a time the book-word Anglo-Saxon) was, as it still is, freely open to religious influence, and was practical then as it is now. There was more in our forefathers, as Mr. Smiles lately illustrated afresh from the old and thoroughly Dutch dyke-works constructed by them, of the Frisian than of the Saxon. The blood alliance of the English is rather with those Dutchmen who, in Elizabeth's day, fought the great battle of civil and religious liberty upon the narrow ground of their own soil against the tyranny of Spain, than with

the Dane or German. The air of home in the towns of the Dutch, and even in the flat Dutch scenery, their commercial spirit, their bygone power at sea, their solid, practical domestic ways, and their religious mind, closely ally the Dutchmen with the Early English in their character. Until the Normans came, the English were not only as serious and industrious as the Dutch, but quite as much deficient in the sense of fun. They gave philosophers and teachers to the Court of Charlemagne; through that to Europe. Their best religious houses were great factories, into which loose material of knowledge was imported from abroad, often at great cost, to be worked up into compact epitomes. The higher motive of exertion was developed in men's hearts, and if the authors now supported by the Church worked for their sustenance, they worked also with all their hearts for love of God. The pious fiction of the dream of the herdsman Cædmon, and of the direct interposition from heaven that gave to his noble paraphrase of Scripture stories into English verse a stronger hold on the surrounding peasantry for whose instruction it was made, was a fraud honestly meant, and may escape blame if interpreted by the imperfect ethics of that day, which now disgrace only as an anachronism some orders in the Roman Church. To all secular knowledge, the nature of the patronage gave also at that period a religious application. Knowledge was thought to be useless that did not serve directly to promote the glory of God: even arithmetic connected its number two with Adam and Eve, its three with the Trinity, its four with the Evangelists, and so forth. Only such knowledge was in the highest degree practical, and to diffuse practical knowledge was the only labour of the Church. The writings of Bede are an Encyclopædia, and his life at Jarrow was one uniform act of work and worship. "All my life I spent," he says, "in that monastery; and in the intervals between the hours of regular discipline and the duties of singing in the church, I always took pleasure in learning, or teaching, or writing something."

The religious mind and that quiet spirit of work in Bede were English. Outside the monasteries the fields were being tilled, and by successive colonisation the land had been occupied by an industrious race, willingly attentive to the teaching of an honest



clergy. And in these respects the coming of the Normans did not change them.

The Normans were but a new race in France. It was only in the days of Alfred, when our forefathers, who are now Under the Normans. miscalled the Anglo-Saxons, had achieved their best, and were about to lapse into a Dutch stolidity of character, that those bold Northmen settled in France, married the Celtic women there, and became fathers of a mixed race that knew not whence it had come; supposing, indeed, its old home to be somewhere upon the Danube; but that by its combination of the northern strength, daring, and steadfastness in adventure with the Celtic vivacity and love of song, produced a people very rich in stirring life and power. When their chief joined to his rich dukedom in France the throne of England, he became the richest prince of whom a bard could seek reward. French song, Arabic learning sought in Spain by busy scholars, the ready jest, soon familiarised to the whole English people in the miracle play that imparted its half-profane liveliness to religious teaching—such influences stirred English wits. The reckless rule of Norman feudal lords and the scandals often raised among their God-fearing flocks by the excess that had been common, even in Normandy, among the clergy—such influences stirred English temper. Song and romance found friends; but there began at once, and rose gradually in intensity, the determined protest against wrong, which forms the bone and marrow of our literature. There was reason now why men should speak from their hearts; there was reason also why the people should support their spokesman. Even at Court the Norman wits were as earnest in their Latin satires as the men of the soil in their own mother tongue. At last we have the whole religious soul of England centred about Wiclif; and the author of ‘Piers Plowman,’ with the old English religious seriousness, is urging, almost in the old language of the people, with direct moralities, what Chaucer, in the more altered English and with his own livelier wit brightened among the Normans in the capital, was urging with an equal earnestness of heart.

Meanwhile there had been mutations of language, into the reasons of which, as well as the facts of them, the Influence of nation upon nation. student of English must needs enter. For with

Chaucer ends what we have called the Period of the Formation of the Language, and the Period of Italian Influence begins.

At the source of modern European literature the chief spring is represented by the genius of Dante, which descends from a sublime height, as one pure and mighty column, to blend with the noisier and broader streams running from those two other fountains of abundant song and story, Petrarch and Boccaccio. But whence the strength and fulness of these headwaters? What morning dew of poetry, what obscure tricklings of verse, caused, in days barren of wit, the genius of Dante to leap forth from the dry rock?

After the confusion and darkness of the last days of the Ancient Literature, in the south of Europe there was rhyming of love-verses or devotional songs, feeble and rude until stirred into quicker life by conflict with a warm-witted Oriental people. Against this people the Spaniards had to maintain in their own land a daily strife, awakening devotional and patriotic chivalry, and giving soul to song and ballad—and against them the men of southern France went out to fight upon the sacred soil of Palestine. Italy, or the contending cities by which Italy was represented, stayed at home; every man eager to fight with his neighbour and trade profitably with the world. The provincial tongues of the old Roman Empire within the peninsula were marked by thousands of conflicting local forms; each city scorned its neighbour's dialect; classical Latin was a neutral ground of speech, on which a writer for more than the circle of his townspeople could tread without offence. Thus there was no Italian prose before the middle of the fourteenth century; and the first Italian poem—a Dialogue between Lover and Lady, by Ciullo d'Alcamo—which Mr. Rossetti has translated lately among other specimens of the early Italian poets, dates only from the year 1172-78, when the new stir of poetic life south of the Loire and in Spain had transmitted to Italy the impulse derived by others from their contest with the Moor. D'Alcamo was a Sicilian. Folcachiero, whose *Canzone* upon his Condition through Love is almost, or altogether, contemporary, was a Tuscan.

It was at Palermo in the thirteenth century, under the Emperor Frederic II. and his natural son Manfredi, both kings

In the outset  
of Italian  
Literature.

of Naples, that the true beginning was made of an Italian literature. In the men who preceded this period, when Italian poetry was even known as "the Sicilian language," there is no very strong trace of direct influence from Provence. The troubadours on one side of the Alps were but a livelier and more numerous body, kindred even in language to the few rhymers on the other. The boundary line was not strongly drawn between the Romance dialects on either side of Alps or Pyrenees. When the Sicilian Court became a haunt of poets, although troubadours were tempted thither, it was rather from Spain than from France that the chief influence proceeded. The Italian sonnets by the earlier precursors of Dante, do not greatly resemble poems of the troubadours, but are far more kindred in versification to the Spanish poems of the 'Cid,' written a century before the marriage of Frederic of Sicily with Constance of Aragon.

When Frederic II., at Palermo, married to Constance of Aragon, made the Sicilian Court the haunt of poets, it was through Aragon or from the Mediterranean coast of Spain that stray murmurs of the Castilian music penetrated. But the dialects of Aragon and Castile were almost two languages, the Aragonese, spoken along the whole Mediterranean coast of Spain from Cape Palos northward, being in close relation to the Provençal. Unsettled variations, indeed, of the same Occitanian tongue of the troubadours, differing in Provence itself from Italian and Spanish no more than the Tuscan dialect from the Lombard and Venetian, were the language of song along the whole line of Mediterranean coast westward of Genoa, and almost to the Straits of Gibraltar. Thus, for example, with an air to modern readers of the most intelligible polyglot, begins one of the songs of Bernat de Ventadorn, born of the people of the Limousin :

"Non es meravelha s'ieu can  
Meils de nul autre cantador."

The second or "Sicilian" period of early Italian literature received, then, some of its inspiration from a Spanish province, but in the days of Dante and the generations next before him they were the poets of Provence itself, who gave the law of song to Italy.

Not Italy alone was influenced thus from without. The

concourse and conflict of mind in the Crusades had infected courtly wits in Germany also—where the ruggedly grand poem of the ‘Nibelungen’ belonged to the true mind of the people—with the epidemic of the *gai saber*.

In the outset  
of German  
Literature.

The Suabian Minnesänger in the generations before Dante were rivalling the Troubadours of Provence in the fanciful delicacy of their praise of women. Emperor Barbarossa had been crowned King of Provence in 1133, and after the land of song was thus parted from France as a fief of the German empire, the Court of the Suabian Emperors cherished among its own minstrels the artifices of Provençal poetry. The reign of Barbarossa’s grandson, Frederic II., not only established around his Italian throne a golden day of Italian song before the age of Dante; in his own land also he was surrounded by the minstrelsy of such great chiefs of the Minnesänger as Wolfram von Eschenbach and Walther von der Vogelweide, who went with Frederic to the Crusade—men without equals in Italy.

To England also there passed through Northern France the same spirit of southern song and story, not unaffected by the adventurous and busy temper of the thriving Normans, who found work and pay for Chroniclers in verse and prose, and who liked well that the history they made should be written by cunning scholars who, being priests, must have licence to mingle histories of abbeys with the stories of the rise and fall of thrones. Old British tales that had passed out of mind came home again in song from Brittany, ever a distinct stronghold of fiction, yielding the true fairyland of Northern France; and out of such impulse arose also in England, during the generation or two before Dante, little or nothing indeed in imitation of the fantastic and courtly southern love-song which the earnest men of the soil, and the adventurous Normans with blood of the Sea Kings in their veins, were alike inapt to invent—but the first English metrical imitations of the cunningly invented narrative lays and fabliaux, or of the brisk tales of chivalrous adventure. We had in England, during a few generations before Dante, such literature of feigned enterprise and adventure, or true narrative of action by the Chroniclers who waited on a race of energetic history-makers; and together with it there remains enough to show the great dominant characteristic of religious

In England  
under the  
early  
Norman  
kings.

earnestness marking the scanty written utterances of the great Anglo-Saxon body of the people. Brother Orm's 'Ormulum,' a body of Metrical Homilies founded on paraphrases of the Gospel for each day, designed for instruction of the congregation in the daily service of the Church, is the last great work racy of our own soil that remains to us from the century before the birth of Dante. It is carefully furnished with a peculiar device of spelling, doubtless intended to secure the right pronunciation of their own words to the people by ignorant or half-Norman readers.

This being the condition of poetry among the men with whom the new kingdoms of modern Europe were rising into life, whence the sudden predominance of Dante's genius? Why should it be through a most unfortunate outcast from Florence in its day of utmost discord that there came suddenly the Divine Poem which first raised the literature of the moderns to a level with the highest utterances of the ancient world? The rare gift of genius in Dante really fell on the best soil in Europe when, surrounded by the warm artistic spirit of the Tuscans, it lay nurtured in the soul of a man linked to the life of the chief Tuscan city.

Florence was, in spite of its rude turmoil of independence, great among cities of Europe in commerce, a resort of nations, a hive of the most active, earnest, enterprising life. Only in the stir of the city—where man meets man, and each man's energies are called into the fullest play; where commerce brings the world within the city's gates, and yet is not its whole life, but leaves room for all that there is in man besides and beyond the trading spirit to assert itself—can a great centre of literature be established. Such a centre Florence was in Dante's day, and after it.

To the chief discords of North Italy there was an animating soul; the struggle between Guelph and Ghibelline was for a long time practically the battle of popular right against Imperial feudalism. The Peace of Constance, in 1183, established for those Italian republics the possession of the rights they fought for; and during another forty years the Guelphs, who were then the Italian party, had their way. But that grandson of Barbarossa, Frederic II., whom we have found inaugurating in Sicily an Italian *renaissance*, main-

Foundations  
of the early  
influence of  
Italy on  
European  
Literature.

In activity  
of commerce.

In the liberal  
and busy  
sense of  
individual  
and social  
rights.

tained again the Imperial cause in battle against North Italian republicanism. When Dante was born, in 1265, this conflict, not of men only, but of principle, was raging; for Frederic's son, Manfredi, still ruled in Sicily and Naples. During the last five years, since their triumph at the famous battle of Mont Aperti, the Ghibellines had been enjoying sway in Florence; and as the exiled chiefs of the Guelphs did not return till two years after Dante's birth, when Charles of Anjou, crowned by the Pope King of Naples, had overcome Manfredi, we cannot suppose that the respectable, unbanished lawyer, of whose second wife, Donna Bella, Dante was born, though of good family, held anything like the consideration of a party chief.

The Ghibellines who left Florence when, after the arrival of Charles of Anjou, the Guelphs returned, were restored to their homes twelve years afterwards; and already the identification of the Guelphs with a French party, was beginning to deprive their cause of its very soul in its connexion with Italian nationality. Both parties, after the Ghibellines returned, were again combatant fellow-citizens in Florence, from the time when Dante was a boy of thirteen, left during the last four years, by his father's death, in charge of a most careful mother. After four more years, when the poet was in the first flush of manly youth, the famous Constitution of 1282, representative of the highest point of free political strength attained by the city, was established. The soul of liberty had animated even the licence of many a lawless street conflict. The republican spirit, wild enough in some of its workings, gave to the battles in North Italy against encroachment on the civil rights of men, an influence far higher than that of the sentiment which prompted the Crusades. The Crusades, breeding chivalry, gave life and colour to the picturesque fictions of the minstrel, or his courtly refinements in the praise of beauty. But the Lombard cities, whether they fought against feudalism or asserted themselves against one another, were with a rude earnestness discussing at the sword's point the fundamental principles of social life. Given the apt mind, in a society so agitated its whole power could be stimulated into action. In the very focus of this movement Florence lay. The quick observation of the world, and lively sensibilities of a youth of seventeen, Dante brought

to an appreciation of its newly confirmed and enlarged liberties in the Constitution of 1282. His city of a hundred thousand had, by free exercise of industry, attained the bright morning of her golden day. It was becoming the city of two hundred cloth manufacturers and a hundred banks of exchange. The Palace of Justice, and the prisons, and the Bridge of the Trinity, were built less than a score of years before the poet's birth; while in Dante's own time, troubled as Florence was with civil strife, there were built the Baptistery, the Cathedral, the Palazzo Vecchio, the city walls.

In Dante's youth a fanciful love-poetry was still attesting, even among Florentines, the influences of Provençal song. Dante then wrote as others wrote, checking more power of song under the same restraints of artifice. The 'Vita Nuova' represents the song of his youth, a string of ditties and sonnets differing in quality alone, but not in character, from a thousand other compositions of the kind. They describe his love for Beatrice, conceived when he was nine years old; its issue foreshadowed by a dream at the ninth hour before morning, never aiming at a higher reward than the exquisite effects of her gracious salutation. She died young, after marrying somebody else, and died in the year when young Dante was present, as a soldier, at the taking of Caprona. If we are to take as it stands, quite literally—without any allowance for the strainings and refinements of the minstrel's art—the 'Vita Nuova' as the history of Dante's early love, we can see in it only a vain glorification of calf-love, much more open to Leigh Hunt's censure than to the admiration claimed for it by Mr. Rossetti and Mr. Theodore Martin. But it is not to be so regarded. Without questioning for an instant its foundation in fact, we find it everywhere aided by ingenious invention, and improved by conceits of treatment after the manner of the time into which Dante was born.) Its right place is with the poems, whereof many excellent translations\* are given by Mr. Rossetti as accompaniments of his translated 'Vita Nuova.' Let us take, for example, the first sonnet. Having told his mystical dream, he says:—

"I proposed to relate the same to many poets who were famous in that day; and for that I had myself in some sort the art of discoursing with

rhyme, I resolved on making a sonnet, in the which, having saluted all such as are subject unto Love, and entreated them to expound my vision, I should write unto them those things which I had seen in my sleep. And the sonnet I made was this :

“To every heart which the sweet pain doth move,  
 And unto which these words may now be brought  
 For true interpretation and kind thought,  
 Be greeting in our Lord’s name, which is Love.  
 Of those long hours wherein the stars, above,  
 Wake and keep watch, the third was almost nought  
 When Love was shown me with such terrors fraught  
 As may not carelessly be spoken of.  
 He seem’d like one who is full of joy, and had  
 My heart within his hand, and on his arm  
 My lady, with a mantle round her, slept ;  
 Whom (having waken’d her) anon he made  
 To eat that heart ; she ate, as fearing harm.  
 Then he went out ; and as he went, he wept.”

“This sonnet is divided into two parts. In the first part I give greeting, and ask an answer ; in the second, I signify what thing has to be answered to. The second part commences here : ‘ Of those long hours.’

“To this sonnet I received many answers, conveying many different opinions ; of the which, one was sent by him whom I now call the first among my friends ; and it began thus, ‘ Unto my thinking thou beheld’st all worth.’ And indeed, it was when he learned that I was he who had sent those rhymes to him that our friendship commenced. But the true meaning of that vision was not then perceived by any one, though it be now evident to the least skilful.”

Exactly in like manner are the interpretative sonnets of the young poets who were Dante’s fellow-citizens. I still quote from the translation by Mr. Rossetti. Thus answered Guido Cavalcanti :—

“Unto my thinking, thou beheld’st all worth,  
 All joy, as much of good as man may know,  
 If thou wert in his power who here below  
 Is honour’s righteous lord throughout this earth.  
 Where evil dies, even there he has his birth,  
 Whose justice out of pity’s self doth grow.  
 Softly to sleeping persons he will go,  
 And, with no pain to them, their hearts draw forth.  
 Thy heart he took, as knowing well, alas !  
 That Death had claimed thy lady for her prey :  
 In fear whereof, he fed her with thy heart.  
 But when he seemed in sorrow to depart,  
 Sweet was thy dream ; for by that sign, I say  
 Surely the opposite shall come to pass.”

• Thus Cino da Pistoia :—



" Each lover's longing leads him naturally  
 Unto his lady's heart his heart to show;  
 And this it is that Love would have thee know  
 By the strange vision which he sent to thee.  
 With thy heart therefore, flaming outwardly,  
 In humble guise he fed thy lady so,  
 Who long had lain in slumber, from all woe  
 Folded within a mantle silently.  
 Also, in coming, Love might not repress  
 His joy, to yield thee thy desire achieved,  
 Whence heart should unto heart true service bring.  
 But understanding the great love-sickness  
 Which in thy lady's bosom was conceived,  
 He pitied her, and wept in vanishing."

But Dante da Maiano, in his sonnet, proposed fetching the doctor to the author of the verses.

The doctor came in his good time. At the end of the 'Vita Nuova' Dante celebrates his consolation for the death of Beatrice in love of another damsel; and in the 'Convito,' his next work, which added the scholastic to the amatory affectations of the day, he explains that this maid was Philosophy. To conquer his grief he read Cicero's *Lælius* and the *Consolation of Boëthius*, whereby he was so drawn to philosophy that he went to its source in Bologna and Padua, and, after thirty months, was mastered by the love of it. Two years after the death of Beatrice, Dante was married to a noble lady of the house of Donati; and if the marriage was, according to the custom of the day, a matter of convenience apart from love, there is no evidence that it was not a happy one. When, ten years later, he was banished, the poet left five or six little children in his native city with the wife who there only could shelter and rear them; and, being allied to a house then in the ascendant, perhaps recover for them something out of the wreck of their father's worldly substance. The separation was dictated strongly by prudence; and if Dante does not mention his wife in his poetry, for good or ill, so neither does he mention his children, his brother, his father, his devoted mother, nor anything belonging to that strictly private life which he refrained from intruding on the public. Beatrice belonged to the public as an idealised being, of whom what he wrote was to be read with a mystical as well as a natural interpretation. Had Dante, indeed, been trained only in studies of poetry and philosophy, he

never would have passed beyond the 'Vita Nuova,' and the 'Convito,' which link him directly to the Provençalists on the one side, and to Petrarch on the other, and by which he is more especially connected with that sequence of Italian writers, through whose influence a literature marked strongly by the taste for conceits was afterwards established in this country. He would have been little more than a master in the school to which Guido Guinicelli had belonged. He might even have imitated, as at last he did, the 'Tesoretto' of his old teacher, Brunetto Latini, wherein that poet—statesman as he was—coldly described how he was lost in a forest, and found Nature, who told him of many things, God, man, redemption, and the navigation beyond Spain; how in the next forest he was instructed by Philosophy, met the four Virtues, went to the abode of Love, and was led out of the wood by Ovid. But without the vigorous stirring of all his depths, by the events of his life in Florence, Dante never would have, on such suggestion, yielded as he did, for the first time in all literature, the whole innermost truth of a man's soul in a poem passionate with all that was real to him, rising fearlessly to the heights and sounding the depths of an argument unequalled then in its sublimity.

I must not dwell here on the Divine Comedy. ( Its power is in the fulness with which it puts into fitting music a man's soul stirred to the vigorous assertion of all that was best in it. ) Another man might put Solinus, the geographer, in place of Virgil, and produce an exploration of the upper world in terza rima, as a Dittamondo; but beside such work the Divine Comedy was Chimborazo to a mole-hill. We skirt its base, and discuss Dante's 'Vita Nuova' on our way to Petrarch and Boccaccio, when we speak of Italian literature with regard only to its influence upon old English writers.

Relation to all time of the Divine Comedy.

It was, then, by no abrupt transition that the strained and fanciful love-poetry of troubadours and minnesänger passed through the young Dante's celebration of the ideal excellence of Beatrice into the sonnets of Petrarch, from which Surrey and Wyatt and the "courtly makers" of the days of Henry VIII. learnt to new-mould our English verse, and into the Italian taste for conceits which exercised so lively an influence on our Elizabethan literature.

Transmission of certain forms of poetry from the troubadours through Dante to Petrarch.

When Dante in 1304—then thirty-nine years old—was with the army of exiles that almost took Florence by a *coup de main*, the father of Petrarch, a Florentine notary, proscribed with Dante, was a Ghibelline soldier in that army, and on the night of its discomfiture, within the camp, his wife gave birth to their son Francesco. After shifting for seven years from town to town in Italy, the family of Petracco, or Peterkin, settled first at and afterwards near Avignon, where the Popes were in base exile. There the young poet was first taught by an old exiled Italian rhetorician; like a whetstone, said the pupil—blunt himself, but good to sharpen others. How the young Petracco went at the age of fourteen to study for three years in Montpellier; how he studied afterwards for four years in Bologna; was then released from unwilling pursuit of the law by the death of his parents, who left him, with a younger brother, slenderly provided for and in charge of thievish executors; how he and his brother Gherardo entered the Church and looked to Avignon, where John XXII. kept a great benefice-shop, as the head-quarters of preferment, where he found a good patron in the Cardinal Giovanni Colonna; this and much more about himself and his times the poet himself has told. He has branded also with shame the lust and licence of the Papal capital at Avignon. He was a poet and a scholar, half a Frenchman by residence, familiar with French as with Italian love-poetry, with the songs of the troubadours, as with the sonnets of the ‘Vita Nuova.’ It delighted him to pore over manuscripts of Cicero and Virgil, Seneca was dear to him, and the flame of Italian patriotism, quick in him from the first, found fuel even in the Histories of Livy. If the poetry within him made his scholarship at last the mother of a Latin epic upon Africa, the same poetry wedded to love had produced his sonnets in the vulgar tongue that copied and recopied, quoted and requoted, at once became the delight of France and Italy.

Laura, who was born at Avignon of a Provençal family, had been for two years a young wife when Petrarch, at the age of twenty-three, first saw her. She had, in addition to her cross husband, ten children before Petrarch had brought to an end his ideal celebration of her excellence, and it is not probable that her husband, Hugh de Sade, troubled himself a rush for all the

sonnets. Their variations of love sentiment were but the daintinesses of poetical conceit; they expressed skill in a science, the *gay science* wherein even while Petrarch lived in France doctorates began to be granted, by virtue of the edict of Clementina Isaure, Countess of Toulouse, who in 1324 instituted the Floral Games. These games assembled at Toulouse the poets of France, housed them in artificial arbours dressed with flowers, and gave a violet in gold to him who produced the best poem, with the degree of doctor to him who was three times a prizeman. It was only through the affections of a doctor in gay science that Petrarch turned cold in hot weather upon seeing a country girl wash Mrs. Laura's veil, or suggested in the sonnet "*quest' anima gentil*," upon hearing of her illness, that on the departure of her spirit,

"If she establish her abode between  
Mars and the planet-star of Beauty's queen,  
The sun will be obscured, so dense a cloud  
Of spirits from adjacent stars will crowd  
To gaze upon her beauty infinite.  
Say that she fixes on a lower sphere,  
Beneath the glorious sun, her beauty soon  
Will dim the splendour of inferior stars—  
Of Mars, of Venus, Mercury, and the Moon."

The translation is Campbell's. Though he was true, until her death as a middle-aged matron, to the person about whom it pleased him to weave his ideal web, with strong personal liking and perhaps some thin sort of passion for her, we believe that in Petrarch's verse the expression of his patriotism is more real, as it is more noble, than the expression of his love. He sees the foreigner on native soil, and cries, of one heart with the patriots of half a thousand years later,

"Latin sangue gentile  
Scombia da te queste dannose some—"

Or, as Lady Dacre rendered this part of the appeal to the princes of Italy:

"O Latin blood of old!  
Arise and wrest from obloquy thy fame,  
Nor bow before a name  
Of hollow sound whose power no laws enforce!  
For if barbarians rude  
Have higher minds subdued,  
Ours! ours the crime. Not such wise Nature's course.

Ah! is not this the soil my foot first press'd?  
 And here, in cradle rest,  
 Was I not softly hush'd? here fondly reared?  
 Ah! is not this my country? so endear'd  
 By every filial tie!  
 In whose lap shrouded both my parents lie!  
 Oh! by this tender thought,  
 Your torpid bosoms to compassion wrought,  
 Look on the people's grief,  
 Who, after God, of you expect relief;  
 And if ye but relent,  
 Virtue shall rouse her in embattled might,  
 Against blind fury bent,  
 Nor long shall doubtful hang the unequal fight;  
 For no,—the ancient flame  
 Is not extinguished yet that raised the Italian name."

The fire of the poet is almost extinguished in the translation; but it leaped high, and it still animates his country. There was in Petrarch, whose verse still represents the perfection of Italian style, enough of the earnestness that gives to a true poet permanence of fame. Truth subtly expressed lives in many an immortal line even of the most conceited of his Platonic love sonnets. But it was not for his patriotism or for his truth that he was made a darling poet of his age. What the troubadours had begun he perfected. Of the two forms of his verse, he derived one—the sonnet—from the Sicilians; the other—the canzone—from the Provençals. The recital of his verses from town to town clothed ragged men in silks, while Petrarch tells us that even the very shoemakers began to celebrate their loves in emulative rhyme.

In 1359 Dante had been dead eight-and-thirty years. Boccaccio, then a sobering man of forty-six, ten years after <sup>Boccaccio and his</sup> he had written his 'Decameron,' talked theology at Florence with Petrarch, nine years his senior. As Petrarch did not possess among his manuscript books the 'Divine Comedy' of Dante, Boccaccio—appointed at Florence first of a line of professors to expound that poem and to glorify its author—gave him a copy, which was acknowledged in a letter from which one passage, although often quoted, is worth repetition:

"Gladly do I seize this opportunity of confuting the charge made against me by my enemies of hating this great poet. Why should I hate him? I never saw him but once, or rather he was shown to me, and that in my child-

hood. He lived with my father and grandfather, older than the former, younger than the latter, and the same storm drove them all the same day from their country. This similarity of fortune, joined by a union of tastes, united him in strict friendship with my father; but they took opposite courses: my father yielded to circumstances, and occupied himself with the care of his family; Dante, on the contrary, resisted them, and resolutely followed the path he had taken, thinking only of glory, and resigning everything for it. Neither the injustice of his countrymen, nor private quarrels, nor exile, nor poverty, nor love of children or wife,—nothing could distract him from his studies, though poetry demands so much quiet and repose.”

The seven imaginary ladies and three gentlemen whom Boccaccio supposed to shut out the horrors of the great plague of Florence in 1348, by enjoying themselves in a garden with a ten-day feast of story-telling, presented—in the best and easiest, though nearly the first, Italian prose—among their hundred tales the choice tales of the day from the French fabliaux, from incidents of actual life, or from whatever source was open to the author. Even the machinery in which the tales are set came from the East, and had existed in a Latin form two centuries before. The number of the stories also was perhaps determined by the previous existence of the ‘*Cento Novelle Antiche*.’ Boccaccio wrote to amuse the ladies, little prizing what he esteemed as his light labour in the vulgar tongue. But Petrarch’s love-poetry was not more to the taste of the day than Boccaccio’s tales, the very tales of the time, in the temper and manner of the time, perfectly expressed. Collections of stories, linked together by the incidents of a slight containing narrative, multiplied rapidly. Chaucer’s masterpiece, which includes some of the ‘*Decameron*’ tales, was written upon the plan thus established, some thirty years after the ‘*Decameron* ;’ and down to the date of the last Christmas number of ‘*All the Year Round*’ the same example has been potent.

Chaucer, born seven years after the death of Dante, was twenty-four years younger than Petrarch—

“*Fraunceis Petrark the laureat poete,  
Highte this clerk, whos rethorike swete  
Enlumined all Itaille of poetrie,—*”

from whom he says that he took the Clerke’s Tale of the patient Grizel; and he was fifteen years younger than Boccaccio, from whose ‘*Theseida*’ he took the Knight’s

Italian influence on Chaucer.

Tale of Palamon and Arcite, and with whose 'Decameron' his

The native  
and the  
foreign  
elements in  
Chaucer's  
verse.

Canterbury Tales have in common the Tales of the Reve, the Franklin and the Shipman, all of which existed also among the store of French lays and fabliaux open alike to the Italian and the English poet. The complete inertness of the mere conceits of sonnet or canzone on the English mind of Chaucer is worth noting. As translator of the 'Romaunt of the Rose,' he recognised and shared the taste for mystical allegory. But his mind, like that of his countrymen, fastened on a poetry instinct with life and dramatic action. His wholesome sense of the ridiculous caused him to round with a shrewd English humour all the sentimental corners even of the tale of Griselda, thereby humanising it into a more sterling poetry, and doubling the force of its pathos. The influence of the French rhymers and story-tellers, and of the new classical force given in Italy by the great founders of modern literature, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, to the vulgar tongue of the land in which, of all others, the Latin had a right to be retained as its own classical language, we may trace everywhere in Chaucer; but all is digested, and serves only to feed the vigour of a most genuinely English mind. The religious heart of this country also, and its resentment of corruption and injustice both in Church and State, represented in great part by Wiclif, spoke through our great poets, and was as real in Chaucer's fiercely contemptuous jests upon the greed and false pretension of the monks as in the religious allegory by which the author of 'The Vision of Piers Plowman' looked through the griefs of a bewildered and misguided people to the divine simplicities of Christian truth.

The disastrous glories of the reign of Henry V., and the still more disastrous period of the ensuing Wars of the Roses, checked the advance of our literature. Lydgate, in the fifteenth century, turned stories from Latin and Italian collections, from French fabliaux, Church legends, &c., into prolix verse. He enforced the morals a good monk would labour to uphold, but not without admixture of the English satirical spirit, which attacks chiefly the lawyers as a class that had then taken profitable employments out of the hands of the clergy, and the women, who were in those days not more subject

Dark days  
of English  
Literature.

to a refinement of conceited praise than to the coarseness of the most damnatory jesting. Stephen Hawes's 'Pastime of Pleasure' continued on French inspiration the allegorical school of romantic verse, in the style of the 'Romaunt of the Rose,' into the reign of Henry VII. Here the Prince Graunde Amour resolves to become worthy of La Bel Pucell by studies in the Tower of Doctrine. He is taught there by Lady Grammar and her sisters Logic, Rhetoric, Arithmetic, and Music, passes to the Towers of Geometry and Chivalry, then, being made a knight, goes forth to seek adventures; is deceived by the dwarf False Report, kills a giant with three heads, called Imagination, Falsehood, and Perjury, marries his lady, and is happy till made prisoner by Age, who gives him Avarice and Policy for companions; he is slain by Death, buried by Mercy, and has his epitaph written by Remembrance. With Hawes we travel upon one road to the 'Faerie Queene.'

During this period of English social depression by far the best part of our imaginative literature was that which the bright spirits among the people who must still be amused with songs and stories, struck out for themselves, by telling the King Arthur romances and other metrical tales in plain prose, and by turning other pleasant adventures without a word of waste reflection into animated ballads; tales and ballads alike busy with swift action. But while at the English Court the soldier jostled out the poet, during the time of our worst obscurity there was in Italy Lorenzo de' Medici, delighting in the friendship of poets and scholars, and himself poet in the Petrarchan school, renewer of the life of letters. He was born in the days of our Warwick the King-maker, and died in the year when Perkin Warbeck landed at Cork as Richard Plantagenet. The capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 sent refugee Greeks abroad, who taught their language at Lorenzo's Court, made Platonism (partly sound and partly as perverted into fantastic doctrine by the Platonists of Alexandria) nearly as popular as the ingenious search for conceited allegory, the discovery of blemish in the name of beauty in the verse of Petrarch. Lorenzo himself, in a love sonnet, tells how the gods made him poetical. The rays of love from the eyes of his lady penetrating through his eyes to the

Spread of  
Petrarchan  
poetry, and  
rise of  
Platonism.



shadow of his heart as rays of the sun enter the dark bee-hive by its fissure, caused the hive to awake, and fly hither and thither in the forest sipping from the flowers. The Florentine academicians, after the death of Lorenzo's son, Leo X., having been caught in political conspiracy, lost some of their number to the scaffold, and, betaking themselves to purely literary discussion, established in the head-quarters of Italian, that was to say of European, literature and civilisation an idolatry of Petrarch. Each sonnet became the text for endless lessons, dissertations, commentaries, and allegorical interpretations. Leo died in 1521, and it was within the next twenty years that, as Puttenham says, in the latter end of Henry VIII.'s reign, our courtly poets, Surrey and Wyatt, "having travelled into Italy, and there tasted the sweet and stately measures and style of the Italian poësie," became English Petrarchs imitating and translating from their model.

But the vigour of intellectual growth in the great centres of Italian life and commerce was not crippled by this Italian pastoral. hero-worship. A pastoral drama sprang from the seed of faith in the pre-eminent dramatic excellence of the *Bucolics* of Virgil. The 'Orpheus' of the young Poliziano gave a strong impulse to pastoral writing, and the old Latin gods of wood and field were not fetched from afar, as when they reappeared in French or English pastoral. They were in Italy upon their native soil, belonging to a great old time of the Italian people. Of the 'Arcadia' of Sannazaro—a pastoral in prose and verse, including sonnets and canzone of his early years, which dealt with a love begun even earlier in life than that of Dante for Beatrice—sixty editions appeared in the sixteenth century, and it suggested the 'Arcadia' of Sir Philip Sidney.

Philip Sidney is commonly remembered as the all-accomplished young Bayard of Elizabeth's Court, from whom the greatest things were hoped, but who, fatally wounded at Zutphen, died in his early manhood, was mourned as never a private man was mourned before by the whole English Court and people, and was sung in elegy by the best poets of his day. It was not for attractive graces as a courtier that he was thus loved and honoured by his Queen and country. The Queen he

Influence of Petrarch and of Italian pastoral on English literature. The English mind under the Italian manner. Philip Sidney.

thwarted more than once; the people cared little enough for Court accomplishments; and Sidney was not alone in his time young, graceful, clever, and well born. (The half-understood charm in him was that his early maturity expressed, as it were, in the flesh the innermost soul of England, ever young, ever religiously earnest, ever busy in affairs; though quick of fancy, more ready to act than to talk, and deeply interested in what free men knew to be the vital questions of the day.) He was born in 1554, in the reign of Queen Mary, when the State was ill at ease. He lived in days when the strong battle for religious liberty made its sound heard in every Court of Europe. And when the battle, as it concerned England, was fought against Spain on a removed field, yet as truly and with as critical an issue as if it had been fought in Kent or Surrey, he who had in the teeth of all indifference connected championship of religious liberty with every mission that he undertook, fell in defence of it at Zutphen. This was the more than handsome Philip Sidney with whom Elizabeth could not be angry long; this was the man whom his fellow-courtiers honoured in their hearts and England loved.

At the age of seventeen Sidney was, with Sir Francis Walsingham, in Paris during the massacre of Saint Bartholomew; and it was a few months afterwards, at Frankfort, that he became the friend of Languet, whom he met as a fellow-lodger in the house of Andrew Wechel, a printer hospitable, as printers then were, to the travelling scholar. Sidney's mind ripened, and was confirmed in its endeavour towards a diffused liberty of conscience, the faster for communion with Languet, the blunt Huguenot reformer, whom he loved as he praised him afterwards,—

“For clerkly reed, and hating what is naught,  
For faithful heart, clean hands, and mouth as true.”

Languet was thirty-six years older than his friend, and though he died despairing of the world, yet year by year to the last he watched Philip, and openly looked to him as the youth whose earnest heart, bright genius, and strength for labour, joined to his high social position, made his future career the hope of honest men. He prepares, counsels, and cherishes him, as a lady of romance might fortify her knight who is about to go

forth to battle with a dragon. He should not eat too much fruit, or drink too much water, in Italy, and he must avoid the July heat. "If any mischance befall you, I should be the most wretched man in the world; for there is nothing to give me the least pleasure save our friendship and the hope of your manhood." And there was the boy of nineteen with keen English soul watching the butcheries of Alva, and discussing with a strong hope the disastrous news from Belgium. "It is true that all that fair region is in flames, but remember that without this the Spaniards cannot be burnt out." In Italy, Sidney appears especially to have studied geometry, ethics, metaphysics, languages; accounting its poetry his relaxation, and its luxury abomination. The Turks in 1574 thought of invasion, but said Philip—aged nineteen—"I am quite sure that this ruinous Italy would poison the Turks themselves, would so ensnare them in its vile allurements, that they would soon fall without being pushed."

After his return to Ireland, Sidney was at the Kenilworth shows of 1575; his father, Sir Henry, being also present there on business. Philip followed the Queen to Chartley, where he first saw, she being then in her thirteenth year, he in his twenty-first, Penelope Devereux, afterwards married against her inclinations, and, when Lady Rich, celebrated in many sonnets as the Stella to Philip Sidney's Astrophel. It was a bad fashion that set poets' wits at work so pertinaciously to refine compliments on any lady whom they might take, married or unmarried, for their butt. But it had come from troubadour days, through Dante's 'Vita Nuova,' Petrarch's sonnets, and many subsequent imitations of the Laura worship, equally devices of ingenious affectation, and was really little more than a collection of the sort of verses then most favoured, cast into the conventional form. They troubled the peace of Lady Rich no more than Petrarch's genius suggested jealousy to the husband, or shame to the ten children, of Laura. Sidney's sonnets are as distinctly of the school of Petrarch, form and spirit, as his 'Arcadia' is, in its very manner of blending prose romance with metrical eclogue, of the school of Sannazaro. The influence of Italian literature on Sir Philip Sidney's writings, in so far as he wrote merely for recreation, is most direct and manifest.

Reflection of  
Italian love-  
conceits in  
'Astrophel  
and Stella.'

It is a fact, however, that in Sidney's case Astrophel and Stella might have been man and wife had Stella's father lived. Sidney was with Essex in Ireland soon after the Chartley festivities, and was desired at the Earl's death-bed in Dublin. "Oh, that good gentleman!" said Essex, when death was within two days of him and the young Philip had not yet arrived. "Have me commended unto him. And tell him I sent him nothing, but I wish him well—so well that if God do move their hearts, I wish that he might match with my daughter. I call him son—he so wise, virtuous, and godly. If he go on in the course he hath begun, he will be as famous and worthy a gentleman as ever England bred." He did so go on until his early death; and however at odds with truth and sense were the affected forms and overstrained phrases of the Platonic love-poetry then fashionable, I do not believe that he ever harmed with a thought the daughter who was but a child of thirteen when her father on his death-bed thus in his thoughts paired her with Philip Sidney.

In Elizabeth's time we find Spenser still in a few translations and in his sonnets following the lead of Petrarch, but to his 'Faerie Queene' he passed out of the school in which Ariosto was his best beloved master. Petrarch and Boccaccio had died within a year of one another; and exactly a hundred years after the death of Petrarch, came, in 1474, the birth of Ariosto. Ariosto died at the age of fifty-eight. Twelve years after the death of Ariosto, Tasso was born. But Tasso and Spenser were contemporaries, the Italian by nine years the elder man. The dates of their deaths lie close together, Tasso dying in 1595, Spenser in 1599. When, therefore, Spenser introduced into the closing canto of his second book a paraphrase and translation from Tasso's episode of the Garden of Armida, he expressed the exquisite enjoyment of a great poem then new to the world; but his more frequent reproduction of matter from what he calls "that famous Tuscan pen" of Ariosto shows rather the lifelong influence of an established classic that had been singularly in harmony with the whole spirit of its time. Thus the description of the discovery of Duessa, as a "loathly wrinkled hag," is in part taken literally from Ariosto's account of Alcina. The tale of the false Philemon, in the same

Spenser and  
the Italian  
romantic  
poets.

book, corresponding to Ariosto's tale of Geneura; and in Spenser's third book, the tale of the Squire of Dames, which is the Host's tale from the 28th Canto of Orlando, are also well-known examples of this direct testimony to Italian influence.

In nothing are the fellow-feeling of nations and the interdependence of men's minds more evident than in the course of the literatures which express them. The first great Italian poets, themselves bred of their own time under Provençal, not unmixed with Spanish, and even German influence, were by the height of their genius become marks for the eyes of all men who loved poetry. They were not only making their impulse of thought strongly felt in England, they also were winning upon the mind of Spain so surely that in the very days when our "courtly makers," Surrey and Wyatt, were in the latter years of Henry VIII.'s reign bringing the Italian form of sonnet and canzone into England, Boscan was introducing the same sort of sonnets and canzoni into Spanish literature, and beginning what is known as the Italian period of Spanish poetry. Yet while Spain was gradually being taught by Italy, Italy herself was drawing the new life of her own literature from Spain. Spain had been rich beyond measure in ballad and romance. Her poems of the Cid date back to the twelfth century; and whatever romances of knight-errantry had been produced in France and Spain before the opening of the fourteenth century were obscured then by the appearance of 'Amadis de Gaul,' the work of the Portuguese Vasco Lobera. That—soon translated into French—was the great parent fiction of the age chronicled by Froissart. Even Cervantes spared it from his bonfire of Don Quixote's books of chivalry. How perfect was the sympathy between the ideal and the actual, any one may judge who turns from Spanish or French-Spanish romances of the Amadis school to Froissart's account of the lives of the men who read and enjoyed them. Froissart's history describes—with the same gaily confusion of fair ladies, knightly adventure, superstitious legend, pomp of arms in jousting or in war, that we get in the romances—the real life of the next eighty years following the appearance of 'Amadis de Gaul.' Long years of knightly encounter with the polished Arabs, and acquaintance with their Oriental mind, heightened

Foreign  
influences  
upon Italy.  
'Amadis de  
Gaul.'

the sense of chivalry in Spanish prose romance or ballad, and introduced into their stories fairy machinery suggested by tales of the East. But the chief topic was the glory of the Empire of Charlemagne and the prowess of that great King and his Paladins. This prowess was especially displayed in the chain of songs and stories about Charlemagne that were strung together by a French monk of the eleventh century, and, ascribed to Bishop Turpin, are known as the 'Magnanime Mensonge.' The Italian romancers commonly amused themselves by fathering on Bishop Turpin any of their most daring inventions.

The growing taste for romance in Italy kept pace with the advance of court and camp to a social importance higher than that of the religious house. At the Court of Lorenzo de' Medici, while the scholastic conceits of Petrarch still amused the Prince himself, there were the brothers Pulci, one of whom wrote that half-mocking and half-earnest romance of Charlemagne and his Paladins, the 'Morgante Maggiore,' in which Roland, or Orlando, makes his bow to the Italian public as a model knight. Upon him followed, with his 'Orlando Innamorato,' the more seriously romantic governor of the fortress of Reggio, the Count Bojardo, who died leaving his poem unfinished, in his own opinion, and by several cantos more than finished in the opinion of others. The Count was succeeded in his command of the fortress of Reggio by Ariosto the father; and in his conduct of the story of Orlando by Ariosto the son, who took up the tale where Bojardo ought to have dropped it, not where he actually did leave off, and who surpassed it so immeasurably with his 'Orlando Furioso,' that although Bojardo is read now as he was improved sixty years later by Berni, there are few beyond the circle of the students who, even in Italy, read him at all. The ease and playful grace of Ariosto's masterpiece was the result of that great labour without which few masterpieces are achieved. The poet—therein a singular contrast to his successor, Tasso—was of large, robust body and healthy mind; frank, genial, and a hater of ceremonies; true to the sisters who depended upon him, moderate in all things, though tainted with the licence of his time and country. As an intent thinker and sturdy pedes-

Source of the  
new taste for  
romance.  
The Pulci.

Bojardo.

Ariosto.

trian, he found himself one day half-way to Ferrara, when he had but gone out from Carpi for a breath of morning air in dressing-gown and slippers; being so far on the road, he went on to Ferrara. From Carpi to Ferrara is a walk of rather more than thirty miles. What Ariosto did, he did with determination. He pondered his 'Orlando' well before a word of it was written, rejecting Cardinal Bembo's advice to make of it a Latin epic, that would now have been only as much read as Petrarch's 'Africa.' In writing he would often spend a day upon the polishing of a few verses written in the morning; and, having begun his 'Orlando' at the age of twenty-nine, by great industry in eleven years he was able to issue the first forty cantos. Four or five editions in seventeen years testified in those days, when almost every reader was a select man, to its very great success. The central figure of the poem is not Orlando himself, but Charlemagne; the menace of whose kingdom and the siege of Paris are the events laid at the basis of the story. Six more cantos Ariosto added to the poem in his lifetime, five he left to be added after his death. A repolished edition of the 'Orlando' had been issued by him almost in the last year of his life. By writing sonnets and canzoni, Ariosto connected himself with the past literature of Italy; and, by translating Spanish and French romances, he showed what was most interesting to him in the present. His comedies, written in youth, were also repolished in later years, but they want original dramatic life, and are but servile imitations of Plautus and Terence. Every great Italian poet studied the ancients—they were the old classics of his native land—and by right of them and of the literary pre-eminence his country had by this time regained, he could still call the foreigner barbarian. Ariosto's imitation of the ancients is habitual. Distinctly and deliberately the poet turned into the romance form of his own day, poets' tales of Perseus and Andromeda, of Ariadne, or Polyphemus, or gave snatches of literal translation out of Ovid; the Pallas of Virgil reappears in the young Dardinello, many romantic passages from the Latin poets, chiefly Ovid and Virgil, being reproduced by this great chief among their successors in the land. Ariosto quoted and was quoted. When we observe how all prose of his, and afterwards of Spenser's time, is garnished

The taste for  
quotation.

with quotation, we shall understand how the poets also, though their art forced them to assimilate their borrowings, meant by these adaptations not what we now condemn as plagiarism, but the usual homage to the cultivated reader of their day. It was a reader who delighted in such references and allusions, and almost required them of all who would prove their right to engage his attention.

Ariosto cannot have troubled himself very much with the attachment of an allegorical sense to his poetical creations. It was found for him of course. He was Growing demand for allegory. Tasso. soon to be read in an edition, "with the Allegories for each Canto, by Thomaso Percacchi da Castiglione Aretino." Before Ariosto's time a capacity for mystical interpretation was one of the acknowledged requisites of an ingenious poem. Thus the Marquis of Santillana, who died in Spain as a renowned poet about sixteen years before Ariosto's birth, in a critical letter on the history of poetry, defined the art as "an invention of useful things, which, being enveloped in a beautiful veil, are arranged, exposed, and concealed according to a certain calculation, measurement, and weight." The demand for this allegorical element, strong in the days of Petrarch and Dante, set aside by Pulci and Ariosto, was again recognised by Tasso. Tasso, the son of a poet whose laborious epic of Amadis, conceived on the Spanish model, was destroyed at birth by the almost simultaneous issue of his precocious boy's 'Rinaldo,' inherited a highly nervous temperament, and was already touched by insanity when, after completing his 'Jerusalem Delivered,' he gave it up for several years to the stupidities of friendly miscellaneous criticism. The poem, at first called 'Godfrey,' being a somewhat regular epic, with an action occupying forty days of the first Crusade in the year 1099 and setting forth the successful siege that made Godfrey of Boulogne (for a year) King of Jerusalem, there was no need of allegory. Nevertheless Tasso (who, as his insanity grew, nervously delivered himself to be examined and satisfied with a certificate of orthodoxy by an inquisitor, and who was painfully anxious about many things) satisfied morality with an elaborate interpretation of the allegory of his own poem made after the fact.



It was not by right of their literature alone that the Italians of the sixteenth century, claiming the first rank in civilisation, spoke of the other nations, after the old Roman fashion, as barbarians. Cardan, describing to his countrymen his visit to the Court of Edward VI., said of the English that "in dress they are like the Italians, for they are glad to boast themselves nearly allied to them, and therefore study to imitate as much as possible their manner and their clothes. Certain it is that all the barbarians of Europe love the Italians more than any race, among themselves." He hinted that "perhaps these people do not know our wickedness;" but there were Englishmen then living quite ready to cry, with Roger Ascham, shame against "the enchantments of Circe, brought out of Italy to mar men's manners in England." Even our teachers themselves, we are told, certified our attainments with a proverb, saying An Italianate Englishman is an incarnate devil.

But Italy had earned her predominance. The strong life of commercial Florence had, in the fourteenth century, entered into the mind of a large part of Europe. Chaucer read Dante, and was influenced by Petrarch and Boccaccio, as Spenser afterwards by the first masters of sustained romantic song. The action of Italy upon old English and Elizabethan writing was, however, of two very distinct kinds: one was direct, the other reflex. At first, in Chaucer's time, only the direct influence concerns our literary history. No printing-press enticed the vacant mind to busy itself with the blackening of paper. Foreign travel, little known as an indulgence, took chiefly the direction of Jerusalem, and was then undertaken rather on religious grounds than for the mere airing of the wits. When Englishmen kept house, only the fame of the great Italian poets reached them from beyond the sea; but when they went, in search of good society, to Italy itself, they were lost in the midst of the servile drove of imitators, and became part of the herd. When the depression of mind that accompanied our civil wars was yielding to a new activity of thought, and the revival of letters in Italy was making itself felt at the Court of Henry VIII., to visit Italy was the desire alike

Social and  
literary pre-  
dominance of  
the Italians.

The social  
influence of  
Italy on  
English  
Literature.

of the scholar and the courtier. Upon the best minds, travelled or untravelled, the direct and wholesome influence of Italian poetry and scholarship was still conspicuous.

But the prevalence of a poetic element in the Italian character was of itself dangerous to foreigners of colder blood who went to Italy for inspiration. In that land of song, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, there was still to be heard the complaint made by Petrarch generations earlier, that the very tailors and shoemakers stitched rhymes and cobbled verse. Commentators upon Petrarch issued forth out of the printing-offices by dozens at a time, and were to be heard by thousands discoursing in society. His words were picked over for allegories, and his book of verse, weighted with fanciful interpretations, was disgraced into a pattern-book for all tailors of rhyme, a *Follet* for the literary milliner who set the fashion after which the luxury of idleness should be attired. Thus Petrarch unwittingly became a father of conceits. When, after the death of Leo X., the Florentine academicians, sorely punished for political conspiracy, were forced to confine their energies to literature, verbal haggling over Petrarch was their chief delight. Great poets were arising. The romantic epic, the pastoral, the satire, even the drama, all were dropping their first fruits upon the rich Italian soil; but ready rhetoric, of sentiment determined to be clever and not caring to be true, still yielded the husks eaten by the mob alike of the palace and the street. It was the Altissimo Cristoforo, and it was Aretino who was the Unico, for whose sake, when he recited in Rome, shops were closed and houses blazed with light.

What had been, was. Greek literature had travelled the same way. The clever but false rhetoric of Demetrius Phalereus was the hectic flush of eloquence in a decline. The later poets cut up history and science into decoration for their verses. Philetas became erudite in elegiacs, and Euphorion thought truth most acceptable when set out with fable. So it had been also in Rome. There was a thought of his time, not an original folly, in Caligula's proposal to destroy the works of Virgil, bare of ingenuity and learning, and of Livy, cold and negligent of style. Conceits were prized in Rome, and daintily-smoothed periods

Secondary causes of the spread of a taste for conceited writing, Euphuism.

were admired less for their wit than for the words arranged so sweetly, that, as one boasted of his own prose works, people might sing them and dance to them. Seneca was the cause of this, as much as Lyly was the cause of Euphuism. Paterculus, when he endeavoured to account for such a change, suggested\* that the nurse of genius, emulation, forced men who found themselves unable to pass their forefathers by natural walking upon the high-road of literature to quit that track "for paths hitherto unexplored, where novelty might lift them from obscurity, and make their names immortal." There is undoubted beauty in this fall of a literature. It is like that of the autumn woods, where an excessive richness and variety of colouring precedes the dreariness of winter.

There was nothing new to the world, then, in the literature of conceits that throve in Italy before Marini, as in England before Donne. Marini was, like Lyly or Donne, but a representative man. It was he, writing in the days of James I., and having no influence whatever upon Elizabethan literature, who represented the corruption of Italian taste when at its height, gave it a typical form, and therefore has been condemned to bear two centuries of censure for his "stile Marinresco," and be pilloried in dictionaries as the chief corruptor of Italian poetry.

With the spreading of the taste for rhetorical writing, filled with pedantic turns of illustration, similitudes rather ingenious than natural, and the desire of writers to display above all things their skill, the fashion of course ran in favour of the later Latin and Greek authors. Martial and Lucan took the places of Catullus and Virgil, Juvenal superseded Horace, and Seneca Cicero. Seneca's plays were a schoolbook for English boys of Elizabeth's time. Afterwards they were the root of the French tragic drama.

But upon the fashion of speech at Elizabeth's Court there were influences of which we have not yet taken account. Some of its peculiarities, together with the very name that gave the term of Euphuism to its affectations, are to be traced to the Platonists, who were strong in the days of Henry VIII. But Platonism also came to us from Italy. It was in Florence that the refugee Greeks, after the fall of Constantinople, were first welcomed as

revealers of Plato and Aristotle. In Italy Plato, in France Aristotle, was preferred. Neo-Platonists had given interest to the Rabbinical doctrine of the Cabbala, then received by many a good Christian scholar. It was joined to principles of an occult philosophy, partly derived from the same source, but enriched from teaching of the Arabs; and it was confirmed by marvellous recitals in the Natural History of Pliny. "The mysteries of Nature," one of her students then said, "can no otherwise than by experience and conjecture be inquired into by us." Until the asserted experience of ancient naturalists had been disproved by the experience of later times, it was not very unreasonable to assume that the science of the ancients equalled their philosophy and poetry. To deny virtues assigned to certain stones, plants, animals, or stars, simply because they were wonderful, certainly would not have been wise. Even in the magical doctrines then widely accepted there was reasoning entitled to respect. Their basis, it may be observed, was so far from being diabolical, that they set out with a demand for purity of life, and for a high spiritual adoration of the source of all the harmony they laboured to find in the wonders of creation. It is to be remembered, therefore, that those marvellous properties of things, honestly credited and freely used in the fashioning of ornaments of speech, had not for the reader of their own time the inherent absurdity which now attaches to them. It is very difficult indeed now to read in the old sense that kind of writing in which Lyly was master, "talking," as Drayton said,

"of stones, stars, plants, of fishes, flies,  
Playing with words and idle similies."

We must not forget, then, that although Court idlers here concern us more especially, before the idlers went to Italy our scholars as well as our poets had been there. In Italy, Colet, Linacre, Grocyn, Lilly, and Latimer, had learnt their Greek. Even after Elizabeth's day, Platonism survived to the time of the Commonwealth, in Henry More, who wrote Platonic songs of the Soul's Life and Immortality, and dedicated to his friend Cudworth a defence of the Threefold Cabbala. But Henry More's spiritual conceits have no concord with courtly affectations. "If,"

he says, "by thoughts rudely scattered in my verse I may lend men light till the dead night be gone,"

"It is enough, I meant no trimmer frame,  
Nor by nice needlework to seek a name."

To that taste for "nice needlework" Camden objected in "our sparkful youth," ready to "laugh at their great grandfathers' English, who had more care to do well than to speak minion-like."

"I cannot quote a motte Italianate,  
Or brand my satires with a Spanish term,"

protested Marston. Bishop Hall, also, in his satirist days, endeavoured to "check the disordered world and lawless times" with very direct comment upon the fashions then prevalent in dress and speech. He decried the "words Italianate, big sounding sentences, and words of state," used by the Marlowes, whom, as tragedians, he scornfully compared with Seneca: for even the satirist himself was of his time. Seneca was his tragedian; Juvenal and Persius were the models of his satire; and because he was the first to imitate these writers, he supposed himself to be the earliest of English satirists. His work opens with an allusion to the pines of Ida. He was prompt as others of his day in coupling Ariosto with Du Bartas, "Salust of France and Tuscan Ariost," and he was not without his own relish of conceits, vigorously as he attacked the fool in far-fetched livery of mind and dress.

What Hall; writing a few years after Lyly, censured in verse, Ascham's unaffected prose had censured yet more vigorously in his 'Schoolmaster,' a work published by his widow seven or eight years before 'Euphues' appeared. There is reason for suggesting, if not for believing, that John Lyly drew from this work of Ascham's both the motive and the title of his fashionable novel. 'Euphues' paints the same Italian Circe against whose snares Ascham warned his countrymen, reminding them that "if a gentleman must needs travel into Italy, he shall do well to look to the life of the wisest traveller that ever travelled thither, set out by the wisest writer that ever spake with tongue, God's doctrine only excepted, and that is Ulysses in Homer." The 'Schoolmaster' observed that

The English  
mind under  
it all. Out  
of decay new  
life.

Ulysses "is not commended so much nor so oft in Homer, because he was *πολύτροπος*, that is, skilful in men's manners and fashions, as because he was *πολύμητις*, that is, wise in all purposes and ware in all places." Against Circe's enchantment Homer's remedy was the herb Moly, "with the black root and white flower; sour at the first, but sweet in the end, which Hesiodus termeth the study of virtue." This was of all things most contrary to what Ascham called "the precepts of fond books of late translated out of Italian into English, sold in every shop in London. . . . Ten sermons at Paul's Cross do not so much good for moving men to true doctrine as one of these books do harm with enticing men to ill living."

Let it here be remembered that the period of English literature more directly influenced by the frivolities of Italy dates from the time of our Reformation in the Church, and occupies a period in which minds engaged with intense activity upon the settlement of great religious questions became also more and more deeply engaged in political assertion of the rights of subjects. Throughout the days of civil war and of the Commonwealth Italian influence extends. To that part of the period thus defined, in which we find the greatest prevalence of literary affectation, belongs also the truest and most earnest work on which the pens of Englishmen have ever been engaged—our authorised translation of the Bible.

To the same period belongs the best part of our literature. High and true thoughts, with sturdy deeds, were called for by the times. Into the words of vigorous men, living energetic lives of thought or action, the demand for ingenious expression brought new force. There were men trained in this school able to satisfy to the full, out of their natural wit, at once the claims of truth in art, and the popular desire for clever simile, strong line, and pithy phrase. The affectation of the weak forced into a peculiarly emphatic utterance all the originality and power of the strong. To this view of English Euphuism we shall have to recur. At present it is only necessary to remember that, by whomsoever fashions happen to be set, we must not take clothes for character.

Lyly had children, and his book shows, as we shall find, that he thought seriously for himself, and agreed with Ascham upon

questions of education. He was a little man, with a wife and family; he smoked tobacco, and was a wit in society, with a heart full of seriousness; he was a hungry reader of good books, and to the last a hungry waiter on the Court, that repaid his honest labouring to entertain it well according to its humour, only with promise unfulfilled. "Thirteen years," he says, in a petition to the Queen, presented in or about the year when 'Euphues' was published, "thirteen years your Highness's servant, but yet nothing. . . . A thousand hopes, but all nothing; a hundred promises, but yet nothing. . . . My last will is shorter than mine invention; but three legacies, patience to my creditors, melancholy without measure to my friends, and beggary without shame to my family." Surely a touching hint—and it is all the hint we have—of the home life of the Euphuist!

Lyly still in our own day suffers injustice. Labelled by the compiler with a certain character, he is now read only by a stray antiquary once or twice in a generation; and the traditional view of his 'Euphues' is represented by the saying of Gifford, that it "did incalculable mischief by vitiating the taste, corrupting the language, and introducing a spurious and unnatural mode of conversation and action."

The work passed through ten editions in fifty-six years, and then was not again reprinted. Of these editions, the first four were issued during twenty-three years of Elizabeth's reign, the next four appeared in the reign of James, and the last two in the reign of Charles I.; the latest edition being that of the year 1636, eleven years after that king's accession. Its readers were the men who were discussing Hampden's stand against ship-money. During all this time, and for some years beyond it, worship of conceits was in this country a literary paganism, that gave strength to the strong as well as weakness to the weak, lasting from Surrey's days until the time when Dryden was in his mid career. It was of this *culte* that the Euphuist undoubtedly aspired to be the high priest, but it was not of his establishing. Still less, of course, are we entitled to accept the common doctrine that it had its origin in Donne's fashionable poetry, and in the pedantry of James I.

We may pause upon Lyly for especial illustration of the

Duration  
of Lyly's  
popularity.

abiding earnestness that underlies all transient fashions of our literature. Of the treatise on education, forming so prominent a part of 'Euphues, or the Anatomy of Wit,' the main doctrines are such as these. No youth is to be taught with stripes. Ascham and Lyly were alone in maintaining this doctrine against the strongest contrary opinion. Life is divided into remission and study. As there is watching, so is there sleep; ease is the sauce of labour; holiday the other half of work. Children should exercise a discreet silence: "let them also be admonished, that, when they shall speak, they speak nothing but truth; to lie is a vice most detestable, not to be suffered in a slave, much less in a son." Fathers should study to maintain by love and by example influence over their sons as they advance to manhood; "let them with mildness forgive light offences, and remember that they themselves have been young. . . . Some light faults let them dissemble as though they knew them not, and seeing them let them not seem to see them, and hearing them let them not seem to hear. We can easily forget the offences of our friends, be they never so great, and shall we not forgive the escapes of our children be they never so small?"

Let the body be kept in its pure strength by honest exercise, and let the mind, adds Lyly, falling again into the track of censure followed by all satirists of the day, "not be carried away with vain delights, as with travelling into far and strange countries, where you shall see more wickedness than learn virtue and wit. Neither with costly attire of the new cut, the Dutch hat, the French hose, the Spanish rapier, the Italian hilt, and I know not what." There is nothing, he reminds youth, swifter than time, and nothing sweeter. We have not, as Seneca saith, little time to live, but we lose much; neither have we a short life by nature, but we make it shorter by naughtiness; our life is long if we know how to use it. The greatest commodity that we can yield unto our country, is with wisdom to bestow that talent which by grace was given us. Here Euphues repeats the closing sentences of the wise counsel of Eubulus, scorned by him in the days of his folly, and then passes to a direct exhortation to the study of the Bible. "Oh!" he exclaims, "I would gentlemen would sometimes sequester themselves from their



own delights, and employ their wits in searching these heavenly divine mysteries."

Advancing still in earnestness as he presents his Euphues growing in wisdom and now wholly devoting himself to the study of the highest truth, a letter to the gentlemen-scholars in Athens prefaces a dialogue between Euphues and Atheos, which is an argument against the infidelity that had crept in from Italy. It is as earnest as if Latimer himself had preached it to the courtiers of King Edward. Euphues appeals solemnly to Scripture and the voice within ourselves. In citation from the sacred text consist almost his only illustrations; in this he abounds. Whole pages contain nothing but the words of Scripture. At a time when fanciful and mythological adornment was so common to literature that the very Bible Lyly read—the Bishops' Bible—contained woodcut initials upon subjects drawn from Ovid's 'Metamorphoses,' and opened the Epistle to the Hebrews with a sketch of Leda and the Swan, Lyly, in the book which has been for so many years condemned unread, does not once mingle false ornament with reasoning on sacred things. He refers to the ancients only, at the outset of his argument, to show that the heathen had acknowledged a Creator; mentions Plato but to say that he recognised one whom we may call God omnipotent, glorious, immortal, unto whose similitude we that creep here on earth have our souls framed; and Aristotle, only to tell how, when he could not find out by the secrecy of nature the cause of the ebbing and the flowing of the sea, he cried, with a loud voice, "O Thing of Things, have mercy upon me!" In twenty black-letter pages there are but three illustrations drawn from supposed properties of things. The single anecdote from profane history I will here quote from a discourse that introduces nearly all the texts incorporated in our Liturgy:

"I have read of Themistocles, which having offended Philip, the King of Macedonia, and could no way appease his anger, meeting his young son Alexander, took him in his arms, and met Philip in the face. Philip, seeing the smiling countenance of the child, was well pleased with Themistocles. Even so, if through thy manifold sins and heinous offences thou provoke the heavy displeasure of thy God, insomuch as thou shalt tremble for horror, take his only-begotten and well-beloved son Jesus in thine arms, and then he neither can nor will be angry with thee. If thou have denied thy God, yet if thou go out with Peter and weep bitterly, God will not deny thee. Though with the

prodigal son thou wallow in thine own wilfulness, yet if thou return again sorrowful thou shalt be received. If thou be a grievous offender, yet if thou come unto Christ with the woman in Luke, and wash his feet with thy tears, thou shalt obtain remission."

Surely, if Scott had read 'Euphues,' he could not have been satisfied to describe it through Sir Piercie Shafton as "that exquisitely-pleasant-to-be-read and inevitably-necessary-to-be-remembered manual of all that is worthy to be known, which indoctrinates the rude in civility, the dull in intellectuality, the heavy in jocosity, the blunt in gentility, the vulgar in nobility, and all of them in that unutterable perfection of human utterance—that eloquence which no other eloquence is sufficient to praise—that art which, when we call it by its own name of Euphuism, we bestow on it its richest panegyric."

Sir Piercie Shafton, the Euphuist, talks thus of his 'Anatomy of Wit' as if it were a cookery-book of language for the use of dainty speakers. His eloquence is of the kind that calls an ass "the long-eared grazier of the common," which is hardly to be considered English Euphuism of the court of Queen Elizabeth, but is the Euphuism of the Hôtel Rambouillet. There, Arthénice presided over an Arcadian Academy, to which a nightcap was not a nightcap, but "*le complice innocent du mensonge*."

Of the true form of his conceited writing, Lyly's court-plays, some of them written earlier than his novel, furnish even better example; and their studied prologues, the manner of which Greene exactly copied in the prefaces to his tales, are the most finished miniatures of Elizabethan Euphuism. The prologue to Campaspe will serve very well as an example. Every sentence, it will be observed, has its far-fetched similitude:

"We are ashamed that our bird, which fluttereth by twilight seeming a swan, should be proved a bat set against the sun. But as Jupiter placed Silenus' ass among the stars, and Alcibiades covered his pictures, being owls and asses, with a curtain enbrodered with lions and eagles: so are we enforced upon a rough discourse to draw on a smooth excuse; resembling lapidaries, who think to hide the crack<sup>n</sup> in a stone by setting it deep in gold. The gods supped once with poor Baucis, the Persian king sometimes shaved sticks: our hope is your Highness will at this time lend an ear to an idle pastime. Appion raising Homer from hell, demanded only who was his father, and we calling Alexander from his grave, seek only who was his love. Whatsoever we present, we wish it may be thought the dancing of Agrippa his shadows, who, in the moment they were seen, were of any shape one would conceive: or

Lyncees, who having a quick sight to discern, have a short memory to forget. With us it is like to fare, as with these torches which, giving light to others, consume themselves : and we shewing delight to others shame ourselves."

In the same vein, the lover in the second part of *Euphues*,—*'Euphues and his England'*—ends the letter that declares his passion by telling Camilla that he expects her reply "either as a cullis to preserve, or as a sword to destroy ; either as *Antidotum* or as *Aconitum* ;" and when that fair lady, after supper, takes part in one of the social wit-combats to which I have referred, she begins by expressing, in this cumbrous fashion, her fear that she may be caught tripping :

"I have heard that the Tortoise in India when the sun shineth, swimmeth above the water with her back, and being delighted with the fair weather, forgetteth herself until the heat of the sun so harden her shell, that she cannot sink when she would, whereby she is caught. And so may it fare with me that in this good company displaying my mind, having more regard to my delight in talking than to the ears of the hearers, I forget what I speak, and so be taken in something I should not utter, which haply the itching ears of young gentlemen would so canvas, that when I would call it in, I cannot, and so be caught with the Tortoise when I would not."

When this clever maid's antagonist replies to her, he lauds her eloquence, and very properly observes that she brought out that Tortoise "rather to show what she could say, than to crave pardon for that she had said." There is abundant evidence that fine talkers searched books, and Lyly's books especially, for conceits and phrases to be imitated in their own discourse. It will be remembered that translations of Boccaccio and other works had in those days especially set forth upon their title-pages that they were books in which the art of witty conversation might be studied.

Although the second part of *'Euphues,'* designedly less serious than the first, doubtless assured to that didactic work a fashionable position, the religious earnestness of the close of the first part belonged also to the life of the nation at that time. In religion Lyly was as earnest and uncompromising as a Puritan could wish to be, and yet maintained his ground as a court-wit. In religious polemics he could not altogether avoid taking part, and there he was honestly of one mind with the bishops and the court. Publications, issued from the wandering press that defied interdict, dispersed, now out of Surrey, now out of Northampton—

shire, now out of Warwickshire, the denunciations of Martin Marprelate against a hierarchy of petty antichrists, petty popes, enemies of the gospel, committers of the unpardonable sin. These publications used such verbal quips as the taste of the day cherished, and addressed the subscribing clergy as "masters of the confocation or conspiracy house," fickers (vicars), "paltrypolitans," "right poisoned, persecuting, and terrible priests, my horned masters;" and to the writers Lyly is said to have given—in a pamphlet named after a common phrase of the day for rough nursing—*Pap with a Hatchet*. Gabriel Harvey ascribed this piece of controversial work to Lyly; and though the rough controversial tone is certainly without a counterpart in Lyly's other writings, it is to be remarked that he shows himself in two or three places to be uneasily conscious of its roughness. His defence is, "Who would curry an ass with an ivory comb? Give the beast thistles for provender." "If this vein bleed but six ounces more," he writes towards the close of the pamphlet, "I shall prove to be a pretty railer, and so in time grow to a proper Martinist;" but, after all, he takes leave of his adversary with a hearty "farewell and be hanged."

If we look from the influence of his day exerted upon Lyly to the influence exerted by him, we shall find this also blended with the common taste for wit from Italy. More prolific than Lyly, as an Elizabethan novelist, was Robert Greene. He was a close imitator at once of Lyly and of the Italians, accepting Lyly as a master in the manner of his speech, but looking more directly to Italian example for the matter of his stories. 'Euphues' was a novel so much over-weighted with didactic matter that it hardly could be called a story; but Greene, if he invented any of his own plots, had unquestionable genius as a story-teller. It will be remembered that from his 'Pandosto,' Shakespeare took the subject of the 'Winter's Tale.' The same writer, Greene, also followed up 'Pandosto,' nine years after the appearance of 'Euphues,' with 'Menaphon,' a book having for second title 'Camilla's Alarm to slumbering Euphues in his melancholy cell at Silixedra.' This he described as "a work worthy the youngest ears for pleasure, or the gravest censure for principles;" and it is the novel furnished with that prefatory address to the gentlemen-students

Influence of  
Lyly and the  
Italians on  
Robert  
Greene.

of both Universities, commonly ascribed to Nash, which presents to us so useful a sketch of the literary humours of the time.

The writer of the preface to 'Menaphon' had a fair sense of good literature, and a love of his own language :

"Tut," say our English Italians, "the finest wits our climate sends forth are but dry-brained dolts in comparison of other countries ; whom, if you interrupt," he writes, "with *Redde rationem*, they will tell you of Petrarch, Tasso, Celiano, with an infinite more of others. To whom if I should oppose Chaucer, Lydgate, Gower, with such like, that lived under the tyranny of ignorance, I do think their best lovers would be much discontented with the collation of contraries if I should write over all their heads, Hail fellow well met ! . . . Should the challenge of deep conceit be intended by any foreigner to bring our English wits to the touchstone of art, I would prefer divine Master Spenser, the miracle of wit, to bandy line for line for my life in the honour of England, against Spain, France, Italy, and all the world."

At the date of this writing Spenser had not yet published the first three books of the 'Faery Queen,' and his fame with the public rested on the eclogues of the 'Shepherd's Kalender,' then in their third edition, vigorous with religious feeling and so direct in sympathy with the French Huguenots that three of them are almost literal translations from Marot. Shakespeare had not been two years in town ; and, with his life as a dramatist yet before him, was writing or about to write his delicate poetical jest upon Euphuism, putting his hook through it as though he loved it, in 'Love's Labour's Lost.'

Of all quips upon ingenious emptiness, that play of 'Love's Labour's Lost' is the most perfect. I am not first in observing that the one hint of business in it, the question on the surrender of Aquitain, is only named to be passed by. What action we have is based entirely on the living out of a conceit, and of all that is done the issue is in nothing. We hear affected talk in many forms :

Love's  
Labour's  
Lost, a jest  
upon the  
fashionable  
style.

"Taffata phrases, silken terms precise,  
Threepil'd hyperboles, spruce affectation,  
Figures pedantical."

The King in his sonnet to his mistress foreshadows even the sublimities of Crashaw's Magdalene :

"Thou shin'st in every tear that I do weep ;  
No drop but as a coach doth carry thee,  
So ridest thou triumphing in my woe."

But the sharpest satire is expressed in the pompous emptiness of Don Adrian Armado, by whom "our court you know is haunted :

"A man in all the world's new fashion planted,  
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain."

His bravery of wit is shiftlessly dependent upon that of the child Moth, whom he patronises, for it is with that as with the bravery of outside show upon his person. When he is called upon to strip and combat in his shirt, he must own that "the naked truth of it is, I have no shirt." There is schoolmaster Holofernes, too, who can tell us that "Ovidius Naso was the man, and why indeed Naso, but for smelling out the odoriferous flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention? The fantastical word-combats of such characters, as given by Shakespeare, have a close resemblance in spirit to some of the scenes of Lyly's plays,—to those, for example, in *Eudymion*, which jest with Sir Tophas, the bragging soldier :

*Samius*.—But what is this? Call you it your sword?

*Tophus*.—No; it is my smiter, which I by construction often studying to be compendious, call my smiter.

*Dares*.—What, are you also learned, sir?

*Tophus*.—Learned? I am all Mars and Ars.

*Samius*.—Nay, you are all mass and ass.

*Tophus*.—Mock you me? You shall both suffer, yet with such weapons as you shall make choice of the weapon wherewith you shall perish. Am I all a mass or lump? Is there no proportion in me? Am I all ass? Is there no wit in me? Epi, prepare them to the slaughter.

*Samius*.—I pray, sir, hear us speak. We call you mass, which your learning doth well understand is all man, for Mas, maris is a man. The As (as you know) is a weight, and we for your virtues account you a weight.

*Tophus*.—The Latin hath saved your lives, the which a world of silver could not have ransomed. I understand you and pardon you."

It need hardly be remarked that the crowding of classical allusions into every sentence must have been, to Shakespeare's poetical sense, dull even as material for jest. He laughs at it, but does not attempt to mock it with close imitation.

While 'Euphues' was thus in fashion, Shakespeare being yet young as a play-writer, and at the date of the critical preface to 'Menaphon,' Bacon was a young barrister, part deviser of the dumb shows at Gray's Inn, and

*Duration of  
Italian in-  
fluence in  
the taste for  
conceits.*

within two years of his appointment as Queen's Counsel. Sir Philip Sidney had been dead two years, and Ascham twenty years. Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, whose pen contributed to the first English tragedy, still had some twenty years of life before him. Of Marlowe's brief career only five years were yet to come; of Greene's but four, during which his overcharged confession and self-accusation of an ill-spent life would give some strain of a wild sobbing earnestness to his last novels. Ben Jonson was then but fourteen years old; Fletcher but nine; Beaumont, Massinger, and Webster, three or four. Donne was a youth of sixteen, and twenty years were yet to pass before the birth of Milton, who was himself ten years older than Cowley, and twenty-four years older than Dryden, who was a man forty years old at the birth of Addison. Throughout the whole period thus indicated, the taste for conceited writing introduced from Italy, in or before the first years of the reign of Elizabeth, prevailed. It was modified by the character of the sovereign, and influenced in some respects by the tone of public feeling in each generation; but the desire for constant imagery, for cunning sentences, and ingenious allusions, that, by display of a writer's reading, should make out his title to be read, abided by the courtiers and scholars, who were not only the chief critics but who formed a large proportion also of the readers of a book. The dust of Latin in the sermons of Bishop Andrewes; the quaint wit of Fuller, which obtained for him two audiences—one within doors and the other out of window—in his little chapel in the Savoy; the sententious writing in the 'Enchiridion' of Quarles; manifest clearly enough their relationship to Euphuism. Old Izaak Walton,—whose life ran through a part of Elizabeth's reign, and extended through the whole subsequent period even until Addison was a boy of eleven,—becoming weary of the strain of wit, looked back from the days of Charles I. to " 'Come live with me and be my love,' that smooth song made by Kit Marlowe, now at least fifty years ago. The milkmaid's mother sung an answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days. They were old-fashioned poetry, but choicely good; I think," he says, "much better than the strong lines that are in fashion in this critical age."

At what level Euphuism stood, when it came strained out of the brains of those ordinary people who make up the substance of polite society at court, Ben Jonson has shown, with a spice of malicious caricature, in 'Cynthia's Revels.' The play, produced only two years before the death of Elizabeth, was wholly designed as a jest against what its chief Euphuist describes as "your shifting age for wit," when you must prove the aptitude of your genius; if you find none you must hearken out a vein and buy." It was to bid men put only to manly use the powers of their intellect—

Ridiculed by Ben Jonson in 'Cynthia's Revels.'

"And, for the practice of a forced look,  
An antic gesture, or a fustian phrase,  
Study the native frame of a true heart,  
An inward comeliness of bounty, knowledge,  
And spirit that may conform them actually  
To God's high figures, which they have in power."

We may connect the taste for conceited writing in the days of Lyly with that of the early days of Dryden, by reference to an author who is now read only by the minute student of literature—Guillaume de Saluste du Bartas. He was a French nobleman, born about the year 1544. He was educated as a soldier, shared the creed and rose with the fortunes of Henri IV., to whom he became attached as gentleman-in-ordinary of the bedchamber, and by whom he was employed as a negociator in Denmark, Scotland, and England. He fought at Ivry, and sang of the battle, but died four months afterwards of the wounds he received in it. When not engaged in political or military duty, this worthy gentleman who was a Euphuist of the first water, wrote poems in his château of Bartas, and his poem of the 'Divine Weeks' went through thirty editions in six years. It was translated into Latin, Italian, German, and English, generally more than once into each language. Its metaphors are extravagant, its classical compounds are barbarous. In France, as in England, the book is now but a curiosity of bad taste to the few who read it or know anything about it. The fate of its style has justified one of the sound maxims in Ben Jonson's 'Discoveries,' that body of opinion in which is to be found our first good exposition of

French Euphuism The 'Divine Weeks' of Du Bartas.



the principles of wholesome writing—"Nothing is lasting that is feigned; it will have another face than it had ere long. As Euripides saith, no lie ever grows old."

James I., who was among his translators, sought in vain to retain the divine Du Bartas at his Court, and Sylvester became a laurelled poet mainly upon the strength of his English version of the 'Divine Weeks' and the other works of the same hand. "I remember, when I was a boy," writes Dryden in his preface to the 'Spanish Friar,' "I thought inimitable Spenser a mean poet in comparison of Sylvester's Du Bartas, and was wrapt into an ecstasy when I read these lines:

" 'Now, when the winter's keener breath began  
To crystallize the Baltic ocean;  
To glaze the lakes, to bridle up the floods,  
And periwig with snow the bald-pate woods'—

I am much deceived if this be not abominable fustian, that is, thoughts and words ill sorted and without the least relation to each other."

We must not forget, however, that the popularity of Du Bartas in this country was due not only to the harmony of his conceited style with the prevailing fashion, but to his Protestant faith and the religious character of all his writings. The First Week of seven days, or books, sings the Birth of the World: the Chaos, the Elements, the Sea and Earth, the Heavens, Sun, Moon, &c.; the Fishes and Fowls; the Beasts and Man; the Sabbath. It is not worth while to illustrate by more citation the affectations of a book deservedly forgotten; but we may take from the Vision of Tongues, in the poem of 'Babylon,' which belongs to the second day of the second week, the names of the four persons who, in Queen Elizabeth's time, had been regarded by a polished Frenchman as the chief supporters of each modern language. Of the Italian, Boccaccio, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso; of the German, Peucer, Luthér, Bucer, and Butric; of the Spanish, Guevara, Granada, Boscan, and Garcilaso (the two poets last named were the chief introducers of Italian style into Castilian poetry); of the French, Marot, Amyot, Ronsard, and Duplessis Mornay; of the English, Sir Thomas More, Sir

Nicholas Bacon, Sir Philip Sidney, and Queen Elizabeth herself, who—

“with phrases choice,  
So on the sudden can discourse in Greek,  
French, Latin, Tuscan, Dutch, and Spanish eke,  
That Rome, Rhine, Rhone, Greece, Spain, and Italy,  
Plead all for right in her nativity.”

The Queen's skill in choice phrases, and her power as a linguist, had of course favoured the growth of Euphuism at Elizabeth's court. The character of James I. lowered the dignity, while it extended the domain, of literary affectation. A new strength of religious and political feeling caused the conceited and pedantic style to be often animated with a heat of life and passion in the days of Charles I. and of the Commonwealth. Much of the common language of the Puritans was Euphuism, cast by the fire of zeal in a religious mould. We see the grandeur of it in Cromwell's description of his victory over the Scotch at Dunbar, and the “poor, weak faith wherein, I believe, not a few amongst us shared, that, because of their numbers, because of their advantages, because of their confidence, because of our weakness, because of our strait, we were in the Mount, and in the Mount the Lord would be seen.” We have it in bathos, when, after Cromwell's death, a follower “declares his steps to princely perfection, as they are drawn in lively parallels to the ascents of the great patriarch Moses, in thirty degrees to the height of Honour.”

Meanwhile in France the taste for ingenious conceit and old Roman mythology, which Italian influence had made there also fashionable, was being modified by the national character. Du Bartas, when in the ‘Divine Weeks’ he spoke of the mutability of form and constancy of matter in all things upon earth (including literature), drew from his countrymen the same example that his translator Joshua Sylvester notes parenthetically in the English,—

“Here one thing springs not till another die,  
Only the matter lives immortally.

\* \* \* \*

Changeless in essence ; changeable in face,  
Much more than Proteus or the subtle race  
Of roving Polyps who (to rob the more)  
Transform them hourly on the waving shore,

Much like the French, (or like ourselves, their apes,)
 Who with strange habit do disguise their shapes ;
 Who loving novels, full of affectation,
 Receive the manners of each other nation ;
 And scarcely shift they shirts so oft, as change
 Fantastic fashions of their garments strange."

Thus in the ephemeral verse that illustrates especially a foreign influence and passing fashion of a day, we have in France, as in England, foreign influence and fashions of a day condemned. As for Italian influence in France, Petrarch himself was, by residence, a Frenchman, France looked as England never did to the Italian Popes, and, speaking herself a language of the Latin group, as England does not, took more naturally, if not more generally, than England ever could to enjoyment of the old classical mythology and imitation of old classical forms of speech.

There was nothing antagonist to such tendencies in the current influence which her other neighbour, Spain, was exercising on the minds of France. Spain, too, spoke a Romance tongue, and early in the sixteenth century the chief poet of Spain was Boscan, who abandoned the old Gothic forms for professed imitation of Petrarch. He would replace the true Spanish ballads with his 'Mar de Amor,' Sea of Love, and with love "sonetos" and "canciones" that imitated Italian tenderness as well as the more fervid and sonorous Spanish voice was able to repeat its accents. That tenderness was even more closely represented by the Petrarchan writing of Boscan's friend, the soldier Garcilaso de la Vega, who sang Arcadian peace and died storming a fortress. The Spaniards, too, were looking back to Latin and Greek masterpieces with a kindred interest. Garcilaso fastened upon Virgil as well as Petrarch; Boscan translated 'Hero and Leander' out of Greek; Diego de Mendoza, poet, novelist, historian, and for six years Charles V.'s Captain-General in Italy, was also a famous collector of Greek manuscripts. The studied imitation of Sallust in Mendoza's 'History of the Rebellion of Granada,' and the over-elaborate nicety in a rhetorical use of words, will also indicate how little of antagonism to the Italian influence France would find in the concurrent influence of Spain. Chiefly that added tendencies to a more pompous manner than Italian ex-

Spanish  
influence in  
France  
allied to the  
Italian.

ample warranted. A Spaniard could say of his queen entering Madrid in January, that she surpassed herself as a sun, and with the serenity of her visage gave life to the meadows and strength to the plants; or of the Spanish kings, that the sun seemed to take its course about their throne, and that their crown was the Zodiac on earth.

The relish of such exalted nonsense was encouraged in France by the bedsides of the *Précieuses*, partly because it was the character of those ladies rather to spend thought upon words than words upon thought. As Regnier described the critics to whose school they belonged—

Tendency  
of French  
literary  
conceit to  
verbal  
criticism.  
The reason  
of it.

——“s'ils font quelque chose,  
C'est prosier de la rime, et rimer de la prose.”

Nevertheless French literature was at this time advancing to its highest point of influence, and way was being made, even by these verbal critics, towards a point at which France causes a very sharp bend in the current of our English literature. There was a reason for the minute attention that the French began to pay to the vocabulary of their language at a time when Shakespeare proved our English capable of speaking all that man's wit can imagine or his heart can feel. North and south of the Loire there were still the *Langue d'Oc* and the *Langue d'Oyl*, in their extreme expression rather sister languages than dialects. Speech had been made unwholesome by the personal impurity of princes, and then came, in Henri IV., a king who with his Béarnois brought the Gascon dialect into familiar use at Court. The truest sense of literature would make a French writer of that day incessantly conscious of deliberation as to what should and what should not be admitted as classical French words into works for which he desired permanence. The proper and common disposition was to refer back to the parent classical tongue as a standard, and Ronsard was not alone in the desire to borrow dignity out of the Greek. He lamented in verse that he might not use the words “Ooymore, dyspotone, oligochronien,” and he affected even a more Latinized grammar of French; such, for example, as the comparison of adjectives with “eur” and “ime.” But Ronsard was in his own time the darling poet of his country. The Academy of Floral

Ronsard.

Games gave him a silver Minerva, with the name of "French poet *par excellence*." Mary Stuart gave him a silver rock showing the spring of the Permessus, and addressed to "Ronsard, the Apollo of the spring of the Muses."

Thirty years younger than Ronsard, Malherbe during the first quarter of the seventeenth century became the most determined champion of the verbal purity of French. He was known as the tyrant of words and syllables. "This doctor in the vulgar tongue," wrote his friend Balzac, "used to say that for so many years he had been trying to de-Gasconize the Court, and that he could not do it. Death surprised him when rounding a period." "An hour before his death," says his disciple Racan, "Malherbe woke up with a start to correct his nurse for use of a word that was not good French; and when his confessor reprimanded him for that, he said that he could not help himself, and that he would defend to the death the purity of the French language." We only understand, but Malherbe felt, the need of earnest critical attention to the unsettled language of his country as France rose in power. Deliberation in the choice of words made him a slow writer. He spent three years in the composition of an ode intended to console the President of Verdun for the loss of a wife. When the ode was finished, the President had consoled himself by marrying another.

At the Hôtel Rambouillet Malherbe was the chief guest in the first years of its fame. Catherine de Vivonne de Pisani, when in 1600 she married, at the age of sixteen, the Marquis Rambouillet, Grand Master of the Royal Wardrobe, had before her half a century of life, during which she could indulge her taste for Parisian literary conversation. Born in Rome and with Italian blood in her veins, she was skilled in Italian and Spanish, and delighted in the literary spirit of her day, seasoned with the ingenious and harmless flatteries by which only an ear is tickled. Receiving company on her bed, after a fashion of the time and the manner of the whole community of *Précieuses*, who followed in her steps—so giving to fashion the phrase "courir les ruelles"—and in winter denying fire as perilous to the complexion of herself and of her delicate guests in chamber, corridor, or alcove, the Marquise de Rambouillet

The meetings  
at the Hôtel  
Rambouillet.

received princes and wits at her weekly feasts of verbal criticism. Her only direct service to literature is, that by argument with Voiture she saved to France the word "for," which had been doomed, but of her indirect influence it is not easy to suggest the limits. Before her circle Corneille read his tragedies, and the youth Bossuet first displayed the genius of the preacher. Purity of speech was demanded of all who frequented the Hôtel Rambouillet. There was to be no unclean word, and much that was common it pleased the particular genius of the house to call unclean. The Marchioness disdaining her own common name of Catherine, Malherbe tortured his wit and produced for her instead of it Arthénice, its anagram. Vaugelas the grammarian ranked above princes at the Hôtel Rambouillet. "If the word *féliciter* is not yet French," wrote Balzac, "it will be so next year; M. de Vaugelas has given me his word not to oppose it." Over-familiar words, if tolerated in the French at large, were replaced at the head-quarters of polite speech by delicately-concocted phrases. As the Marchioness saw company in her night-cap, and the idea Night-cap might have to be expressed in conversation, while the word was too coarse for choice lips, its association with sleep and dreams suggested that it might be referred to as "the innocent accomplice of falsehood." Laughter was clownish, but if mentioned it might be described as loss of seriousness. A gentleman in this assembly had once to mention hay; *foin* happens, however, not only to mean hay, but to be also a mild French interjection. Baulked in his attempt to find a substitute for the word, he became impatient, and for the innocent *foin* rapped out a "Devil fetch me, there's no speaking in this house!"

The Marquise de Rambouillet set a fashion among ladies, and there remains a register of eight hundred she-critics The Precieuses. esteemed precious to France,—"*Précieuses*,"—as centres of refining influence. The fashion had extended even to the provinces, when Molière attacked it with his ridicule.

The Hôtel Rambouillet was in the height of its credit when, in 1635, Richelieu proposed to a weekly assembly of The French Academy. male authors which met for mutual aid and discussion at the house of Conrart, one of their number, corporate life

under the protection of Louis XIV. The offer was accepted, and the French Academy was thus founded, with especial charge over the French language, which the Academicians were to purify and fix by the publication of a Dictionary and Grammar.

It has been said of Dr. Johnson's English Dictionary that he alone compiled it, while the Dictionary of the French Academy was the work of forty men, each subject to much feminine dictation. But between the two works the essential difference is not to be forgotten. The forty men in Paris had power of life and death over the words of the French language committed to their hands. The word they admitted into their dictionary was thereafter to be admissible in good French literature, and the whole host of words that they rejected were, by virtue of their rejection, to become unlawful in polite society. It was to be a settlement of language by a *coup-d'état*. But there has been neither need nor taste in England for that method of procedure. Dr. Johnson might insert or omit what he pleased without crushing a syllable of spoken English. French refinements tended to a tight-lacing of the language in a dictionary carefully devised as stays, which are to this day supposed to give it a fine figure and material support. Broad-chested English has allowed its lungs free play, and will be strapped up in the leather covering of no man's dictionary.

The work of the Academicians and their revision of it, with its tedious debates over the definitions of words, remained so long in hand that the first edition was not published till 1694, by which time critical France had advanced, with the help of Boileau, far ahead in a new direction. Colbert looked in upon the dictionary-makers when they had been for some years revising letter A, and found them debating on the sense of the word "Ami." "Is a friend bound by a social or emotional tie?" "Can he be called a friend whose friendship is not reciprocal?" "Are men to be called friends when their warm professions of goodwill are based upon self-interest?" "Who is a friend?" "Where is a friend?" The Minister, hearing such questions debated, ceased to ask when the Academicians would have talked their way down fairly into Z.

Settlement  
of the French  
language by  
the forty  
dictionary  
makers.

Although one would look for nothing less than strict obedience to system, in the free, various utterance of the many voices that in each successive generation become fixed by the help of ink and paper, it is certain that, in the mass, men's minds obey their proper influences as the tides the moon. The moving forces lie within the mind of man himself—honour of truth and right, hope of a worthy future. Eloquent minds, in whom this honour is most active and this hope most sure, express the highest literature of each day, and their thoughts are lasting only in as far as they are true. Thus we might lay it down dogmatically as a fact that French literature advanced from the question of words and letters maintained by Ronsard and Malherbe to the larger question of forms and laws of literary composition discussed with especial power by Boileau. But they were not the devotees of choice phrases and words by whom such an advance was made, after the highest level in their former way of zeal had been attained. The larger part of the flock simply went on in the old way, and it was their aimless, down-hill wandering, as followers of a track which, for a certain distance only, took the upward way, that provoked from strong and honest minds a vigorous attempt to put them right. There was especial strength and honesty in the mind of Boileau, who earned a name for himself in French literature as the Poet of Good Sense, and whose good sense had in this country distinguished followers.

Advance of  
French  
writers from  
verbal to  
literary  
criticism.

In our days of the Restoration and the years following the Revolution of 1688, it was Boileau, dying aged seventy-five, in the year 1711, who gave laws on Parnassus and taught other poets to be critics. His father was an actuary; his mother died in his infancy; he was a sickly boy, subject to an unfriendly nurse; at twenty he was an advocate unfit for the Bar, turning his mind to theology. But his place not being in the pulpit, he abandoned the Church, and not the Church only, but also a benefice of eight hundred livres that he had been persuaded to hold at least for a certain term of years. In laying it down, he gave to the poor all it had brought him. "But," said an abbé, who himself owned many benefices, "that was a good thing to live upon, M. Boileau." "Not a doubt of it," Boileau answered; "but to die upon, Monsieur l'Abbé—to die

Boileau.



upon!" It was his honesty that gave permanent force to this man's genius.

Resenting the degradation of taste in his day, Boileau laughed at the public that could see a rival to Corneille in Scudéri the dramatist, and could read with delight dainty romance after the manner of the *Précieuses*, by Scudéri's sister Madeleine, who carried to her death, at the age of ninety-four, the reputation of which she laid the foundations at the Hôtel Rambouillet. It was a reputation raised by her romances—the 'Grand Cyrus,' in ten volumes; 'Clelia,' in ten volumes—both of them first published in the name of her brother George, and many other works. Among those other works was 'Almahide, or the Slave-Queen,' in eight volumes, which appeared when the critic, a young man of four-and-twenty, was bent upon active war against all this emptiness that had usurped the place of honest wit. And who was then emptier than Abbé Cotin? Him Molière immortalised as the Trissotin of the *Femmes Savantes*, and young Boileau attacked in his third satire. Chapelain, also, after thirty years' gestation, during which he was well nourished by the Duc de Longueville, had brought to light, when Boileau was a youth of twenty with a lively sense of the dull and absurd, twelve cantos of his 'Pucelle.' "I will make war against all this," said the young critic, three or four years later. It was urged upon him that he would bring a swarm of enemies about his ears. His answer was, "Well, I shall be an honest man, and never fear them."

Boileau declared war in his satires, whose censures are an index to the literary vices of their day. Enemies he did make, but as he had right on his side and honest sense, with ample strength of wit to make them felt, they battled with him in vain for mastery over the public mind. Cotin was dropped into obscurity. Chapelain left unpublished the remaining cantos of his 'Pucelle,' and to this day they exist only in manuscript. Molière, though by seventeen years Boileau's elder, was his companion and friend. Comrades of his, too, were La Fontaine and the pure-hearted Racine. Racine, within two or three years of equal age, was his next friend, whose death, after forty years of intimacy, caused Boileau to withdraw from court and close his own life in retirement. In the bright hours of their

life at Molière's country-house, or at Boileau's rooms in Paris, what suppers had there been, where Molière, Boileau, La Fontaine (who has described them), Chapelle, and Racine discoursed freely, and took gaily wise counsel together! They argued often of sound literature, and condemned each other for offences against sense to readings out of Chapelain's 'Pucelle' that lay ready for the purpose. Twenty lines was the sentence for a serious offence; but for outrages that deserved capital punishment, a page.

The literary mind, as it was cultivated at those suppers, was expressed in Boileau's poem on the 'Art of Poetry.' The critical shortcomings of that work, which may be said to have given the law for some years to French and English literature, nearly all proceed from a wholesome but too servile regard for the example of the ancient classic writers. The chief authors of Greece and Rome were to be as much the models of good literature as the Latin language was a standard of right speech. This led, indeed, to a sound contempt of empty trivialities, but it left the critic with faint powers of recognition for a Dante, a Shakespeare, or a Milton. Boileau was even hindered by it from perceiving how far Terence was surpassed by his friend Molière. His discipline thus tended obviously to the creation of an artificial taste for forms of correct writing, excellent in themselves, but as means of perfect expression better suited to the genius of the French than of the English people. He was a true Frenchman, and English writers erred by imitation even of his excellence, in adopting too readily for a nation Germanic in origin and language forms that harmonised better with the mind and language of a Latin race. But, at the same time, they shared with their neighbours the benefit of assent to the appeal in his '*Art Poétique*' on behalf of plain good sense against the faded extravagancies of that period of Italian influence from which life and health had departed:—

"Évitons ces excès. Laissons à l'Italie  
De tous ses faux brillans l'éclatante folie.  
Tout doit tendre au Bon Sens."

These lines declare the living spirit of the poem, in which, if we are to see only in one foremost work the altered temper of

a generation, it may especially be said that the period of Italian influence ended and that of French influence began.

It was in 1672, and at the age of thirty-four, that Boileau wrote his 'Art of Poetry.' Dryden's age was then forty. In the previous year the Duke of Buckingham had satirized on the London stage, in his 'Rehearsal,' the conceits and fustian of recent English dramas, as they had been cooked by Davenant, Dryden, and others, to suit the spoiled palate of the town.

"Spite of myself, I'll stay, fight, love, despair ;  
And all this I can do because I dare,"

says one of Dryden's heroes ;

"I drink, I huff, I strut, look big, and stare ;  
And all this I can do because I dare,"

mocks, in the 'Rehearsal,' Buckingham's Drawcansir. 'Tyrannic Love' was one of Dryden's last popular plays when Boileau's 'Art of Poetry' appeared in Paris. In that play a guardian angel praises his sword "all keen and *ground upon the edge of day* ;" and a bold martyr, sentenced by the tyrant, thus defies him :—

"Where'er thou stand'st I'll level at that place  
My gushing blood, and spout it at thy face.  
Thus, not by marriage, we our blood will join ;  
Nay, more, *my arms shall throw my head at thine.*"

And these excesses were intentional. Poets, Dryden wrote, in the Prologue to this play, misapplying Horace's '*Serpit humi tutus*'—

"Poets like lovers should be bold and dare,  
They spoil their business with an overcare :  
And he who servilely creeps after sense  
Is safe, but ne'er will reach an excellence."

In England, then, there was as much need as in France of Boileau's critical gospel of *Bon Sens* ; and the light wits of the day were disposed to follow for some short distance in that direction the lead even of an earnest man, at any rate if French.

For in those days France was strong and England weak. The King of England was a pensioner to the French Crown. Mademoiselle de Querouaille was, ~~the~~ Duchess of Portsmouth, agent of Royal France, and favourite of Royal England, receiving an estate from the French, and incredible sums out of the Secret Service Money from the

The period of  
French influ-  
ence on  
English  
literature.

pockets of the English people. When there was no soul at Court meaner than that of the King, capable neither of love nor of friendship, who affected men only when they had ceased to be manly, and women when they had become the shame of their own sex, Court patronage of the theatre tainted the stage, and polite literature, still dependent upon courtly patronage, found no fit audience for any song like that of *Una* and the *Red Cross Knight*: it must needs be frivolous or censorious, critical or satirical. But there were nevertheless great questions in State and Church astir among the English. Vital change was impending; and the satire of a Dryden—since he who could look back in his maturest day with so tender a fellow-feeling to the purer strains of Chaucer, yet must needs be, for the sake of bread, a dramatist in his relation to the people, and a satirist in his relation to the Court—the satire of a Dryden struck through the outsides of things deep into the gravest realities that then concerned his country. Therefore it is that Dryden's verse lives yet, to be read and honoured, while the words of the light wits who played over the mere frivolities of life belong to the antiquities of English literature, long since dead to the English people.

But the Court and the Stage, if they were for a little time after the Restoration the main sources of literary repute and reward, could not claim to themselves all the nation's mind. Vigorous in the heart of the great English people there lay still the religious earnestness that gives strength to their character. In his jail there was John Bunyan writing '*Pilgrim's Progress*;' and in his home sat Milton, who had as a youth dedicated his powers to God's service, and devoted himself to literature as one resolved that he would "do all as in my great taskmaster's eye." Unrecognised by fashion, Milton's '*Paradise Lost*' was steadily on its way to a second edition when the courtly wits of England looked to Boileau's newly-published '*Art of Poetry*' for help to the perception of good writing.

Boileau, in France as well as in England, gave an impetus to critical inquiry into literary styles and forms of composition. René Rapin, an elegant writer of Latin, whose treatises on Polite Literature were translated into English by B. Kennet; René le Bossu, Andrew Dacier

English acceptance and imitation of the French classical critics.

and his wife, Fontenelle, and others, critics who, like Boileau, looked to the Greeks and Latins for their standard of good literature—all had their English representatives. John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, achieved his metrical ‘Essay on Poetry;’ Horace’s ‘Art of Poetry’ was translated by the Earl of Roscommon, who wrote in verse also his own ‘Essay on Translated Verse;’ Horace’s ‘Art of Poetry’ was imitated by Oldham; while Boileau’s ‘Art of Poetry,’ translated by Sir William Soame, a friend of Dryden’s, was not published until it had received many touches from the hand of Dryden himself, who, in the Prefaces to his Plays, had proved himself the first of English critics. The most English and independent of the critics of his time was Dryden, yet even he cites, in the Preface to his conversion of ‘Paradise Lost’ into an opera, as authorities in literature “the greatest in this age, Boileau and Rapin; the latter of which alone is sufficient, were all other critics lost, to teach anew the rules of writing.” What wonder then that this allegiance to French critical taste produced for us a Rymer and a Dennis?

There can be no surer test of the quality of English fashionable and high critical taste during this period of French influence than in the slowness of our critics to perceive the marvellous success of Shakespeare as a direct student in the school of life and nature.

Pepys witnessed the performance of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ in March, 1672, and pronounced the play “to be the worst he had ever heard.” Not long after, he went to the King’s Theatre, where, he says, “we saw ‘Midsummer Night’s Dream,’ which I had never seen before, nor shall ever again, for it is the most insipid, ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life.” In 1676, in going to Deptford by water, he read ‘Othello, Moor of Venice,’ which, he continues, “I ever heretofore esteemed a mighty good play; but having so lately read ‘The Adventures of Five Hours,’ it seems a mean thing.” ‘The Adventures of Five Hours,’ which made ‘Othello’ appear “a mean thing” by comparison, was a translation from a play of Calderon. In 1677 Pepys records that he “saw the ‘Merry Wives of Windsor,’ which did not please him at all, in no part of it;” while ‘Twelfth Night’ he esteems “the

What the  
polite world  
and French  
polished  
critics said of  
Shakespeare.

weakest play that ever he beheld on the stage." 'The Tempest' he found "full of so good variety, that I cannot," he says, "be more pleased almost in a comedy, only the seaman's part a little too tedious;" but then he adds "that the play has no great wit, yet good, above ordinary plays." With 'Hamlet' he was "mightily pleased," but, "above all, with Betterton," who personated the Prince of Denmark. When he was first present at the performance of 'Macbeth' in 1664, he calls it only "a pretty good play." Afterwards it rose in his favour, and in 1667 he declares it to be "a most excellent play in all respects, but especially in divertisement, though it be a deep tragedy, which is a strange perfection in a tragedy, it being most proper here, and suitable." It appears from a subsequent entry that the "divertisement" which he considered the especial excellence of 'Macbeth,' meant "the variety of dancing and music."

The professed critics were sometimes not more complimentary, as may be seen in a book published in 1721, at which date Shakespeare's works were only in their fifth edition, and the copies of that fifth edition, published by Nicholas Rowe twelve years before, were still sufficient for the public need. In this book, entitled 'The Laws of Poetry, as laid down by the Duke of Buckinghamshire in his Essay on Poetry, by the Earl of Roscommon in his Essay on Translated Verse, and by the Lord Lansdowne on Unnatural Flights in Poetry, Explained and Illustrated,' we are instructed that

"That famous soliloquy which has been so much cried up in 'Hamlet' has no more to do there than a description of the grove and altar of Diana mentioned by Horace. Hamlet comes in talking to himself, and very sedately and exactly weighs the several reasons or considerations mentioned in that soliloquy,

'To be, or not to be,' &c.

As soon as he has done talking to himself, he sees Ophelia, and passes to a conversation with her, entirely different to the subject he has been meditating on with that earnestness, which, as it was produced by nothing before, so has it no manner of influence on what follows after, and is therefore a perfectly detached piece, and has nothing to do in the play. The long and tedious soliloquy of the bastard Falconbridge, in the play of 'King John,' just after his being received as the natural son of Cœur de Lion, is not only impertinent to the play, but extremely ridiculous. To go through all the soliloquies of

Shakespeare would be to make a volume on this single head. But this I can say in general, *that there is not one in all his works that can be excused by nature or reason.*"

The critic, however, probably Gildon, owned himself sensible that he should raise anger of the uncultivated English people by what he was saying, and meant further to say, upon the faults of Shakespeare. Lucilius, he adds, "was the *incorrect* idol of Roman times, Shakespeare of ours. Both gained their reputation from a people unacquainted with art; and that reputation was a sort of traditionary authority, looked upon to be so sacred, that Horace among the Romans, in a much more polite age than that in which Lucilius writ, could not escape their censure for attacking him; nor can Mr. Rymer, or any other just critic, who shall presume, though with the highest justice and reason, to find fault with Shakespeare, escape the indignation of our modern traditionary admirers of that poet." Rymer himself, forty years earlier, had been even more emphatic. "In the neighing of an horse, or in the growling of a mastiff, there is a meaning, there is as lively expression, and, may I say, more humanity than many times in the tragical flights of Shakespeare." His own notion of a tragical flight we may discover from his tragedy of 'Edgar,' where in the first act Alfrida declares that she will, at Ethelwold's request, discard her ornaments, and the margin directs her to pull off her patches!—

"*Ethelw.* Blaze on, dire comet—may thy influence be  
To crowns and empires fatal, as to me!

*Alfr.* Whither do your rash words and passions fly?  
To calm your mind, my utmost power I'll try.  
If I receive advantage from my dress,  
'Tis that I you might with advantage please.  
If, wanting this, your love be not impair'd,  
These ornaments I readily discard. [*Pulls off her patches.*"]

Four years after the scholiast upon his Grace of Buckingham had spoken the opinions which prevailed among thousands of that day, who looked upon Shakespeare as at best a rude and uncultivated genius, no less a person than Mr. Pope himself became his editor. Whatever may have been his disqualification for his task, there was no man living whose name could do so much towards securing for the dramatist the allegiance of a larger circle of admirers. Yet Shakespeare's

Shakespeare  
endorsed by  
Pope.

works, even when endorsed by the name of Pope, were thought to be a doubtful venture. Only seven hundred and fifty copies were printed, and of these it may not have been the editor's fault that part could not be sold until after a reduction of the price from six guineas to sixteen shillings. It is questionable whether Theobald could have won a public, or indeed a publisher for Shakespeare, had not Pope opened the way. His edition was the first with notes, but they were few, and turned chiefly upon verbal criticism. Pope consulted many of the old copies, professed "to have a religious horror of innovation," and declared that he had not given vent to his own "private sense or conjecture." His alterations, nevertheless, were extensive, and his collation of the quartos and first folio imperfect. His text was full of the errors which had crept into the later folios; and having adopted the theory that many portions of the plays had been interpolated by the actors, and believing that he could distinguish the spurious passages from the genuine, he "degraded" the presumed additions "to the bottom of the page." His licence of conjecture was as largely exercised upon single lines and words, and his objections and emendations often show his ignorance of the manners and language of Shakespeare's times. But we gladly call to mind the finer touches of his pen. To him, for instance, we owe the reading of "Tarquin's ravishing *strides*," instead of *sides*, and the true version—*south* for *sound*—of the delicious lines—

"O it came o'er my ears like the sweet south  
That breathes upon a bank of violets."

Even Pope, then, so far failed to bring Shakespeare into immediate credit, that of the small number of copies of his edition there remained nearly a fifth part for Tonson to get rid of at less than a seventh of the published price. No defect in the editor that could have been appreciated by the public of his own day was accountable for this. The new spirit of French criticism was still ruling among us the taste of the polite; and Pope himself, our English poet of good sense, was as a viceroy for Boileau in England. Pope also had produced his metrical 'Essay upon Criticism,' and his

Under  
French in-  
fluence, the  
English  
mind.



mock heroic *Lutrin* in the 'Rape of the Lock.' But Pope's was English wit; and, if he saw how

"Critic-learning flourish'd most in France;  
The rules a nation born to serve obeys,  
And Boileau still in right of Horace sways,"

he at least was not born to serve. As critic he was an emulator, not an imitator; and he did not, like Boileau, contemplate Nature only in the mirror of the Greeks and Latins. His influence shattered the credit of

"The bookful blockhead, ignorantly read,  
With loads of learned lumber in his head."

A Dennis feebly, but for a time successfully, maintained the literal text of French laws of criticism against the literature of his country; although as a politician he did write on one of his title-pages 'Liberty asserted against the French,' and feared that peace could never be restored if he were not given up to the enemy. He appealed, indeed, in this difficulty, to Marlborough, who said he had no influence with the ministry, but thought his own case as desperate, as he had done almost as much injury to the French as Mr. Dennis himself. Dennis, inspired from such a Helicon as Pope imagined on his writing-table—"a pot of half-dead ale, covered with a Longinus"—was an oracle no more when once he had been dragged out into the daylight.

But if it was Pope, the chief of the new taste among the poets, who in 1725 first sent the English polite world to 'Shakespeare, thirteen years earlier it had been Addison, chief arbiter of taste among prose-writers, the same who, in a metrical account of the greatest English poets, written, according to the mind of Oxford University, in 1694, had passed from Spenser to Cowley with no mention at all of Shakespeare,—it was Addison who had in 1712 brought Milton into fashion. Yet let us not forget that Steele had in the 'Tatler' shown a heart and wit keenly alive to the genius both of Milton and of Shakespeare, before Addison had criticised the one, or Pope had edited the other. Upon the independent genius of Addison, as upon that of all great English writers, the stamp of the English character is set. He revered the ancients, he sub-

Milton  
endorsed by  
Addison.

mitted much to the French critics, and was conspicuous among apostles of the gospel of good sense. He was so well in tune with his own time that, as Swift said in his *Journal to Stella*, "If he had a mind to be chosen king, he would hardly be refused;" but after all, it was the earnest English mind in him that had given breadth and depth to his influence. It was this that had caused him, one January morning towards the close of the year 1712, to introduce, among the 'Spectator' papers that day by day so gracefully and mildly brought to the touchstone of good sense the idler follies of society, Milton himself, heralded by the motto from Propertius, "*Cedite Romani Scriptores; cedite Graii.*" During the next four months Milton was again and again his topic, the 'Spectator' of eighteen successive Saturdays being occupied with the testimony of Addison to the majesty of 'Paradise Lost.'

In bearing witness to Milton, Addison no doubt still paid undue homage to the French lawgivers who held their parliament upon Parnassus; but his homage was free <sup>Latin</sup> <sup>English.</sup> from servility. "A few general rules extracted out of the French authors," he says in one of his Milton papers, "with a certain cant of words, has sometimes set up an illiterate, heavy writer for a most judicious and formidable critic." He demands of the good critic, not, indeed, that he shall look Nature straight in the face, but that he shall be skilled in the Greek and Latin authors; and adds, "There is not a Greek or Latin critic who has not shown, even in the style of his criticisms, that he was a master of all the elegance and delicacy of his native tongue." For Addison also followed, with almost all other writers of his day, the example of the French in testing the literary worth of modern languages, whether Romance or not, by their conformity with Latin style. Even Dryden, although he used a less Latinised English than that which became customary to the writers who immediately succeeded him, declared for Latin as the pattern of good English. • In dedicating to the Earl of Sunderland his '*Troilus and Cressida*,' he says, "How barbarously we yet write and speak your Lordship knows, and I am sufficiently sensible in my own English. For I am often put to a stand in considering whether what I write be the idiom of the tongue, or false grammar and nonsense couched beneath that

specious name of Anglicism; and have no other way to clear my doubts but by translating my English into Latin." This of the language that had sufficed for Shakespeare! It was not then understood that, if the English would do as the French had done, and bring their language into harmony with that from which it was derived, and with the greater number of the minds that spoke it, they must imitate French practice in the spirit, and not in the letter, by laying hold of the so-called "Anglo-Saxon" element, which is to English what the Latin is to French.

This truth is now common enough, and even liable to overstatement, for there remains justification of much study of the Latin model, in the fact that Latin was in a greater degree than Anglo-Saxon a highly cultivated language, delicately illustrating by polished models many and very different forms of literary composition. Our vocabulary, we now know, should be taken as much as may be from the actual sources of the language: but if we look at all, as we may certainly sometimes look with advantage, to examples more than a thousand years old, for help to that exact, clear, emphatic, and durable expression of our thoughts, which is the whole object of writing, it is frankly to be owned that we shall get much better help from Latin than from Anglo-Saxon authors.

At the same time let it never be forgotten that the real question for each genuine writer has been—not, Whom shall I imitate? but, How shall I give to my own mind the fullest utterance? In the distinction between perishable and imperishable reputations this is, in fact, the true form of the literary question, How shall I be saved? In literature, as in everything else, it is the truth only that makes alive. Not the abstract, but the honest, individual truth—a man's truth to himself. No writer has ever manufactured artificially a reputation that would last. Before we go on to note some points in the slow transition from the period of French to the period of popular influence on English writers—which is dominant in our own time—let us consider more fully than we have yet done what an English writer is. To do that we must first recognise the principle that underlies all questions of style, the reason of the difference between written and spoken language.

Origin of  
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Southey said that, to write well, men have only to write as they speak. If that were true, writing must always be, as in good literature it is not, feebler than speech. For the spoken word is emphasized insensibly by every rise or fall, or subtle, emotional inflexion of the voice; by the glance, the varying aspect of the face, the gesture of the hand, the wonderful force of the living presence of the speaker. In aid of speech there is also the living presence of the person addressed aiding the speaker, commonly by actual statements, questions, replies, and running comments, to an exact knowledge of the course he must take to secure full apprehension of his meaning. We know, in fact, that with the aid of helps like these silence itself can be made eloquent. According to the habitual swift use of speech, links in a chain of thought that the particular hearer can supply for himself are omitted; and a sustained argument, complete in itself at all points, is in daily life inflicted upon nobody, except it be by here and there a social bore. It is found also that precise deliberation over the right choice of words, if it involve any delay at all, abates the vivacity of emphasis, and is in common speech a hindrance, rather than a help, to full expression. Verbal exactness is not indispensable, because, where a word is in itself inadequate, there is usually the desired interpretation written on the speaker's face; for an honest man's face is a magic dictionary, always open at the definition of each word that comes out of his mouth. Or, again, if a word fail of its purpose, the failure is perceived, and the defective term is supplemented swiftly with another or a dozen others, as the case may need. Such repetition is, indeed, a customary, and to some extent a necessary, incident of speech. For the spoken word once uttered is not to be recalled for fresh examination. But mortal minds cannot be forced to take the reasonings of any speaker at neither more nor less than the exact pace of his voice. The listener may be actually capable of quicker or of slower apprehension than the pace of thought in the speaker may require, and will find his attention now and then astray. Every speaker does, therefore, often insensibly, and as if by an instinct, lay word over word; vary the form of speech in illustration; pause, remind, recapitulate, whenever it is important that he should be understood. In spoken language, then, we

have the whole force of living expression to give definite emphasis to words that may be insufficient in themselves, and loosely ordered among one another. We have also conditions that have produced a habit of amplification, to save strain on the attention. But for that we should, indeed, find listening much more laborious than reading. For, in grave discussion, he must brace all his faculties to the work who should attempt to seize, and remember for its present sense and future possible relations to an argument in hand, the exact meaning of every word of the stream of sound that flows in at the ear, not always because the receiver is minded to listen, but simply because his neighbour is disposed to speak.

If then a man could so far, by practice, master the mechanical difficulty of uttering his thoughts conversationally at the pace of his pen, which at the swiftest is, we will say, less by six times than the pace of his tongue,—if he could really keep himself from profiting by the five seconds in six forced on him for examination and amendment of his thoughts and language as they flow,—what is it that he would achieve? The written word would be the very body of the lively spoken word, stiffened, and cold, and formally laid out for burial. Our writers would simply be speakers, weaker by loss of all the emphasis that comes of variation in pace, tone, and degree of voice, trick of eye or lip, shrug, gesture—upon all which things the eloquence of speech depends.

But what the writer loses of this manner of expression, he can, and he must, recover by minuter accuracy in the use of words, and by a nice regard to emphasis in their arrangement. “The best words in the best order,” is an old definition of poetry. That does not define poetry. It is the definition of good writing of every sort. Nothing less than the best words in the best order will suffice for the best prose.

The best words sought by a writer are of course those most exactly fitted to expression of the thoughts they represent; the best order is as obviously that which gives to each word in relation to the other words about it prominence proportioned to its value in expression. The best order is that which, in short, puts the emphatic words in the inevitably emphatic places. To a word of

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mouth additional attention is usually called by beating it more loudly against the listener's ear, or by pausing upon it, thereby leaving it to lie undisturbed two or three times longer than its neighbours, and to make proportionate impression upon the receptive mind, or by some other aids that can, and some that cannot, be transferred to paper. In writing, when addressed to strangers who do not supply from memory familiar turns of voice that emphasize familiar turns of phrase,—as friends do, for whom careless written talk may have the truest eloquence,—the writer's sense and force must not be left to the imagination of the reader. Whatever he does say, he must say with all his might. Whatever means of emphasis belong to the nature of his way of utterance, he must apply to the exact enforcement of the truth he has to speak.

In prose writing the grammatical punctuation supplies fixed places of pause; and of that grammatical convenience the good writer makes instinctively a literary use. For as, in speaking, pause is emphasis, so the word placed immediately before an enforced pause is, to the extent of the pause, enforced upon attention. If insignificant words, words whether long or short, not being themselves weighted with living thought, are set in these best places, there is not merely an advantage thrown away, there is the jar of a false emphasis established. The mechanism of prose supplies no other aid to emphasis than this; and in our own strong flexible English this is enough, since English writers and speakers have at all times held themselves free to mould their language to their thought, with a precision unattainable where, as in French, the ordering of words is more restrained.

But if we look from prose to verse, we find the essential advantage of that other manner of writing to lie in certain fixed conditions of its mechanism that secure to its language many additional places of inevitable emphasis. Besides the use that may still be made, in verse as in prose, of the pauses required by the sense and indicated by the punctuation—although these, when rightly harmonised, only add force to pauses of the metre—there is a fixed series of those very frequent pauses in the metre, and, more than that, there is security in the succession of

fixed accents for a determinate use of the emphasis produced by laying stress of voice on certain words. Weak thought expressed in verse writhes on these frequent places of inevitable emphasis that thrust their points into its words of little sense. Have we not all heard sentimental lectures upon "What is poetry?" and have we not been told again and again that it is an effusion from about the heart,—a sort of spiritual pericarditis,—distillation from the soul, and so forth. Yet surely, whether it be in prose or verse, there is no sound literature but that which contains full utterance of men speaking with all their hearts and souls whatever they may have to say. It is only when the utterance has been so weighty or so witty, that almost every other word in it has force enough to justify a pause or raising of the voice upon it,—it is only and always then that, whatever the topic, verse takes the place of prose as the fit method of expression. In the high sentimental sense, Pope was no poet; but only frequent emphasis of verse in pause and accent could enforce attention to the aptitude of every word in his terse phrasing of witty sense.

The additional emphasis sought by special device of pause and accent, or by rhyme, which is emphatic in as far as repetition of sound fixes attention on the word where it occurs, is mechanically attainable also in other ways. The most ancient English poetry—that which is called Anglo-Saxon—mainly depended for its emphasis upon alliteration; and its system of alliteration so distinctly required that the swift triple recurrence of the same initial letter should direct attention only to the three emphatic words in each brief couplet, that, if one of the words had an insignificant prefix, the prefix counted for nothing, and the alliteration must be fastened upon the essential part of the word only. This right use of alliteration being based on perfectly sound reason, it has been retained as an occasional and secondary aid to emphasis by nearly all our poets, and it may, of course, be employed not less usefully in prose than in verse. Only of this, as of rhyme, accent, pause, and of all means of directing a particular attention to a word, it is to be remembered that, where they do not help, they hinder that full and exact expression which is the one object of a sterling English writer.

Ornament, in the common sense of superfluity, has no place in good literature.

Homely considerations, such as these, which have not been thought worth mention by the formal writers upon writing, lead, I believe, really more surely than any more pretentious way, to a right judgment upon English authors. They are truths known by most readers passively that should be known actively, and should be constantly applied. It needs no scholarship to understand clearly what are the fixed conditions of good English writing; and clearly we must understand them if we are justly to estimate the variable influences which have affected forms of writing in the past, or hope to reason safely upon the state and prospects of the literature of the day in which we live. Thus we have partly seen how writers are affected by the circumstances of their time. There has been a great period of Italian influence on English literature, characterised throughout by an extravagant taste for emphasis. The demand for incessant cleverness in force of phrase and ingenuity of illustration was then so imperious, that only the most powerful minds could satisfy it without being driven into false emphasis by the equal loading of all parts of their argument with allusion, alliteration, illustration, metaphor, and everything else that should represent the seasonable outstepping of a man's free wit, not the monotonous briskness of a day's work on the treadmill. False emphasis, bred of ill-regulated esteem for cleverness and strength, was the characteristic fault to which the taste of the polite world tended in the period of Italian influence; but out of it came, from a few vigorous English minds, the largest and the truest utterances. Of the succeeding period of French influence critical pedantry was the prevailing bane. Even the critics who, in upholding all good sense, had an occasional approving nod for nature, held literary good sense to consist chiefly in the imitation of Horace, carved rules of composition out of the *Æneid* and *Odyssey*, and by reference to those judged even Milton, whom, nevertheless, Addison held by, even when he was an Oxford Latinist of three-and-twenty accepting generally, with little question, the decrees of the arbiters of taste acknowledged in his University. Addison was content then to excuse Milton by suggesting that "he seems

Variable influences on the mechanism of English writing.



above the critic's nicer laws." In that poem to which I have before referred, and which so conveniently sets forth the literary taste of good society in England under the sway of the French critics, we read of Chaucer that—

"In vain he jests in his unpolished strain,  
And tries to make his readers laugh in vain."

Of Spenser we learn that he "amused a barbarous age," but that his

"mystic tale, that pleased of yore,  
Can charm an understanding age no more ;  
The long-spun allegories fulsome grow,  
While the dull moral lies too plain below."

Addison would not have had the soul in him that gives life to his name, had he not grown into the perception of something higher than the dominant bad taste of the polite. In later years he spoke of Spenser as "in the same class with Milton." But because his matter was not reconcilable to any Latin formula, and his manner was not that of an Englishman ever considerate whether his English style would bear direct translation into Latin, the "understanding age" looked down from the top of its own small model of Olympus, where the Dennises and Rymers sat as gods, and spat on the ground at the name of Edmund Spenser. That understanding age usually now suffers undue contempt in the true heart of the young student of literature, born to the various influences of a period of popular influence in which taste is free; and some may think that its old state of slavery has been almost exchanged for an excess of licence.

A year younger than Addison was when he wrote at Oxford his verses to Sacheverell, upon the English poets, a student at the sister University delivered in 1831, in his college chapel, a prose oration, which, for independence of thought, elevation of tone, and original perception of the true spirit of literature, far surpassed in its promise any achievement of the youth of Addison. The name of the student, then within but twenty-one months of his death, was Arthur Henry Hallam. It is he whose early loss struck from the heart of one friend and fit companion a pure and high memorial song, causing a poet of our day and country to give to all literature the truest, wisest

Christian poem upon death. The subject of young Hallam's oration was the 'Influence of Italian works of imagination on the same class of compositions in England.' Though but a youth of one-and-twenty, he was the first to feel distinctly and point out the strength of the successive influences of Italy and France on English writers. Of writers under the French influence he spoke as many young Englishmen speak, and will ever speak, when they have given their hearts to enjoyment of all that is noblest in their native literature, and are strong in generosity of feeling, while the judgment is yet immature:—

"The restoration of Charles II.," he said, "was the trumpet of a great woe to the poetry of England: from this time we may date the extinction of the Italian influence as a national feeling, however it may occasionally be visible in the writings of scattered individuals. But before the guardian angel of our land resigned for a season his flaming sword, unable to prevent the entrance of that evil snake, who ever watches round the enclosure of this island Paradise, and seeks by variety of shape,—sometimes elevating a crest of treacherous lily whiteness, sometimes smoothing a polished coat of three magical hues,—to introduce, as best he may, his malign presence into the abode of liberty and obedience—before, I say, the higher literature of England became subject to Paris, its fainting energies were gathered up into one gigantic effort. Milton, it has been well said, constitutes an era by himself." . . .

But although he had not yet grown into full appreciation of the writers of this period of French influence, the earnest young critic could perceive some service that they might have done before their authority was again overmastered. He is, it, perhaps, quite right in his reasoning; and when he speaks of the period of German reaction, he mistakes, as we shall find, a secondary for a leading influence. Nevertheless, how well is all this said,—how far wiser, in relation to the time when it was spoken, than the young Addison's mere rhyming echo of the decrees of good taste at his university:—

"I would not be understood, in what I have spoken concerning the influence of France, as believing that influence productive of unmixed evil. England, it should never be forgotten, had in the last century a great political part to perform. It was necessary, perhaps, that her language should receive some considerable inflexion, corresponding to the active tendency of the public mind, and expressive rather of the direct palpable uses of life than of sentiments that overleap the present. For such a purpose the spirit of French literature and the laws of French composition were peculiarly fitted. Nor is it a reasonable cause for regret that our language has taken into itself some of that wonderful idiomatic force, that clearness and conciseness of arrangement,

that correct pointing of expression towards the level of general understanding, which distinguish the French tongue above all others with which we are acquainted, and render allowable a comparison between it and the Latin, which occupied nearly the same post in the old civilization, as the organ, not of genial and original thinking, but of thoughts accumulated, set in order, smoothed down, and ready for diffusion. The close, however, of the last age, and the first quarter of the present, have witnessed a powerful reaction, as well in England as on the Continent, against the exclusive dominion of prosaic, and what are termed utilitarian tendencies in literature. It will not be disputed that the form at least of this reaction came to us from Germany. Not until the offerings of Schiller and Goethe had been accepted, did Coleridge or Wordsworth kindle their sacrificial flame on the altar of the Muses. Not until a whole generation of Germans had elaborated the laws of a lofty criticism were its principles effective on our own writers."—From the *Remains in Verse and Prose of Arthur Henry Hallam, with a Preface and Memoir.* (First privately printed in 1834.) Murray, 1863.

In generalisation upon groups or sequences of natural facts and the fruitage of men's minds under right cultivation, literature is as much in the course of nature as the fruitage of the apple-trees. We must not always forget the unity and harmony of life and thought within the small round of this world. There are no sciences in nature, no classifications, no laws, but the single Fiat of All-wise Beneficence. This has produced a creation of which the minutest details blend and fit together with the most intricate and surprising harmonies. All that we know points always to more forms than we have learnt to understand, of various and perfect adaptation to the single use of multiplying the great sum of happiness and beauty. But the wisdom of the one great Divine Thought would be indeed unsearchable to us if we sought, as gods ourselves, at once to grasp it all. Instead of attempting that, we use, in aid of our weakness, those artificial steps of our own making in theories and classifications which are as the rounds of Jacob's ladder between earth and heaven. It is by exercise of the power given to him of searching the Divine Thought with some apprehension of its harmonies that man has attained whatever height of intellect he calls his own. There is no other way of knowledge. And it is with the moral world as with the intellectual. Only by battling out slowly and experimentally the moral law, can man rise even to a faint participation of the active strength of the Divine Beneficence. There is no other way of right. But as

Purpose and  
limits of gene-  
ralisation.

there is no battle without resistance, no strength that is not exercised, no health in a merely passive virtue, were all men of one right mind, uniformly good, impeccable, untroubled, they would be happy only as the ants and bees are happy, in a life regulated by a faultless instinct. All part would be denied them in the utmost blessing of childlike participation in the sacred energy of Him who made them in His image. Our literature shows one body of men in generation after generation working onward by aid of the natural conflicts and varieties of mind. We cannot understand our own work if we do not see also how the minds of our neighbours have worked with us, and our minds with theirs. But, however far we look, the broadest view we can take still does not, and will never, contain the whole truth. When, therefore, in dealing with our own literature, we pass it out, however aptly, into periods of this influence and that, let us remember that all such distinctions are in their nature arbitrary. They are not dominant truths with which all details must be harmonised; they are but incidental facts, dwelt on as aids to systematic study. And even in this respect they are not to be dwelt upon dogmatically. <sup>The period of popular influence.</sup> Changes of literary taste are never so abrupt that all writing in one fashion ceases when a new fashion first becomes predominant. The four periods of English literature run, more or less, into each other. The period of French influence and that of popular influence now dominant do not merely shade into each other; they run also for some time parallel, blending together often, but not always. With Daniel Defoe this fourth period must be said to begin, but after his time the French critical school maintained its influence yet for another century over one section of English writers.

It is to be remembered also that at all times, with perhaps the one exception of the 'Faërie Queene,' it is, in England, the English people that has inspired the highest forms of English literature. In the first period of our literature the popular influence was almost throughout a marked character; but in a merely literary classification founded upon changes in the form of writing, the fact that in this early period the language itself was being formed is, of course, more distinctive.

Afterwards, though there was no reading public outside the select circle of scholars and persons of quality, there was the

English people, open-eared in the theatre, to whose natural heart Shakespeare spoke.

Milton, surrounded by the filth of fashionable wit in Charles the Second's day, remained in unison with the religious earnestness that was not gone out of the national character because a worthless Court claimed momentary precedence. There was not only the one grand English poet who, from the midst of his day's licentiousness, imaged for himself and for all time a naked man and woman—Adam and Eve—in their innocence, with their pure love, human and unconcealed, yet so divine in its humanity that not even King Charles himself could have drawn a licentious thought from any line in the chaste picture. There was not only Milton then. There were also readers enough among the unfashionable men in England to consume five editions of 'Paradise Lost' before Milton received the stamp of fashion.

But we come now to a period when the popular influence, always active upon the best minds, becomes with every generation more and more dominant over the small minds too. For the people at large extend their reading power into departments of knowledge formerly unsought by them, and their favour is found generally to be more remunerative than that of the most princely patron. This period should date from the day when the key turned upon Defoe in Newgate.

● Daniel Defoe, a tradesman's son, born in the reign of Charles II., bred to Dissent, educated by a school-master who did not account the political movements of his time an unfit study for English boys, was, even as a young hose-factor on Cornhill, zealous in the true cause of the English people. Though a Protestant in fierce anti-Popery days, he had no part in the passionate extravagance of a sectarian hatred to the Roman Catholics. But their principles, honestly carried out, were by their nature subversive of liberty of conscience. It happened that civil and religious liberty were in his time, from like causes, in equal danger; but, although a Dissenter, he could fight their battle only on the highest ground, as that of the English people, and not of the Nonconformists only. So it was that he fought, dissociated from the lesser passions of the hour, without one personal adherent. When James II. laboured

Defoe's service of the people.

openly and insidiously, by assumption of a personal supremacy over the laws, to give the Pope his own again in England, the Act of Toleration, by which he released his own church out of bondage, working under the mask of a newly-modelled <sup>and</sup> comprehensiveness of charity, pleased many of the Dissenters. They were glad, by payment of a trifling fee, to open Richard Baxter's prison door. Defoe therefore was little thanked for urging that acceptance of such royal grace was an admission of the King's absolute claim to override the laws. "He that would serve men," said Defoe afterwards, "must not promise himself that he shall not anger them. I have been exercised in this usage even from a youth. I had their reproaches when I blamed their credulity and confidence in the flattery and caresses of Popery, and when I protested against addresses of thanks for an illegal liberty of conscience founded on a dispensing power." The young patriot joined Monmouth when he landed in the West, and, after the night on Sedgmoor, was an exile. But King James's turn for exile quickly followed, and, after the Revolution, William of Orange recognised in Defoe the one sound and most honest English friend. To the cry raised by the opposition that King William was no true-born Englishman, Defoe replied with his satire on 'The True-born Englishman,' rhymes of which 80,000 copies were sold in the streets. Among their home truths are vigorous assertions of the claims of the people against persecution in the Church, or despotism in the State. In these he finds as dangerous a thing

"A ruling priesthood, as a priest-ridden king;  
And of all plagues with which mankind are curst,  
Ecclesiastic tyranny's the worst."

While of the kings false to their trust he says:—

"When kings the sword of justice first lay down,  
They are no kings, though they possess the crown.  
Titles are shadows, crowns are empty things,  
The good of subjects is the end of kings."

Then came Queen Anne to the throne; 'ecclesiastic tyranny and the old doctrine of the divine right to govern ill recovered strength, and hard words hailed on the Dissenters. A substantial blow was aimed in a bill that was to disqualify them from all civil employments. It passed the Com-

Defoe in the pillory.

mons, but failed with the Lords, among whom were the foremost champions of English liberty. Bigoted preachers meanwhile lashed the populace into a heavenly mood for pulling chapels and such; and Sacheverell, preaching at Oxford, had denounced him as no true son of the Church who did not raise against Dissent "the bloody flag and banner of defiance." Then it was that Defoe, a thriving citizen with much to lose, spoke boldly on behalf of liberty of conscience in his pamphlet called 'The Shortest Way with the Dissenters.' He wrote, as in all his controversial writing, to maintain a principle and not a party. He began his satire with a quotation from Roger l'Estrange of a fable that might have been applied to James the Second's Act of Toleration. A cock at roost in a stable, having dropped from his perch, and finding himself in much danger among restless heels, has a fair proposal to make to the horses—that we shall all of us keep our legs quiet. This fable Defoe applied to the Dissenters, who were then asking for equal treatment, although they had been intolerant enough themselves not long since, when they had the upper hand. Professing, in his assumed character of a bigoted High Churchman of the day, to show the vice of Dissent before teaching its cure, he deals, in the first place, a fair blow to his own side for past intolerance. The Dissenters ought not, perhaps, to have been blind to the irony of the second half of the pamphlet; but in the first half the irony is not all against ecclesiastical intolerance. Defoe was against all intolerance, and to the bigotry of his own party Defoe gives—I think seriously and intentionally—the first hit. The succeeding satire on the persecuting spirit of the noisy party in the Church, since it could not easily surpass the actual extravagance of party spirit, had in it nothing but the delicate, sustained sharpness of ironical suggestion to reveal the author's purpose to the multitude. Several reasons, he says, are urged on behalf of the Dissenters "why we should continue and tolerate them among us," as: "They are very numerous, they say; they are a great part of the nation, and we cannot suppress them. To this may be answered, They are not so numerous as the Protestants in France, and yet the French king effectually cleared the nation of them at once, and we don't find he misses them at home." Besides, "the more

numerous the more dangerous, and therefore the more need to suppress them; and if we are to allow them only because we cannot suppress them, then it ought to be tried whether we can or no." It is said, also, that their aid is wanted against the common enemy. This, argues Defoe, is but the same argument of inconvenience of war-time that was urged against suppressing the old money; and the hazard, after all, proved to be small. "We can never enjoy a settled, uninterrupted union and tranquillity in this nation till the spirit of Whiggism, faction, and schism is melted down like the old money." The gist of the pamphlet, the scheme set forth on the title-page as the shortest way with the Dissenters, is propounded in this passage:—

"If one severe law were made and punctually executed, that whoever was found at a conventicle should be banished the nation and the preacher be hanged, we should soon see an end of the tale; they would all come to church, and one age would make us one again. To talk of five shillings a month for not coming to the Sacrament, and one shilling per week for not coming to church,—this is such a way of converting people as never was known, this is selling them a liberty to transgress for so much money. If it be not a crime, why don't we give them full licence? And if it be, no price ought to compound for the committing it; for that is selling a liberty to people to sin against God and the Government. . . . We hang men for trifles, and banish them for things not worth naming; but an offence against God and the Church, against the welfare of the world and the dignity of religion, shall be bought off for five shillings. This is such a shame to a Christian Government, that 'tis with regret I transmit it to posterity."

The pamphlet delighted men of the Sacheverell school. A Cambridge Fellow thanked his bookseller for having sent him so excellent a treatise—next to the Holy Bible and the Sacred Comments the most valuable he had ever seen. Great was the reaction of wrath when the pamphlet was found to be a Dissenter's satire; nevertheless, the Dissenters held by their first outcry against the author. Defoe, aged forty-two, paid for this service to the English people in the pillory, and as a prisoner in Newgate. But his 'Hymn to the Pillory,' which appeared on the first of the three days of the shame of the Government in his exposure, July 29, 30, and 31, in the year 1703, turned the course of popular opinion against the men who placed him there—men, as his rhyme said, scandals to the times, who

"Are at a loss to find his guilt,  
And can't commit his crimes."



It was in the next year, as a prisoner in Newgate, that Defoe, on the 19th of February, 1704, set up his 'Review.'

Defoe in Newgate sets up 'The Review.' The paper may be shortly described in a few sentences from the account of Defoe by Mr. Forster, a biographer whose vigorous and lively essays on Defoe and Steele, and 'Life of Goldsmith,' contain the soundest expression of the spirit of the men themselves, and of their true relations to our literature. Defoe's 'Review,' says Mr. Forster, "was at first a quarto sheet, somewhat widely printed, published weekly, and sold for a penny. After the fourth number it was reduced to half a sheet, and sold for twopence, in smaller print and with double columns. After the eighth number it was published twice a week, on Tuesdays and Saturdays. Before the close of the first volume it sent forth monthly supplements, and at last it appeared on the Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday of every week; and so continued, without intermission, and written solely by Defoe, for nine years. He wrote it in prison and out of prison—in sickness and in health. It did not cease when circumstances called him from England. No official employment determined it; no politic consideration availed to discontinue it; no personal hostility or party censure weighed with him in the balance against it. 'As to censure,' he exclaimed, 'the writer expects it. He writes to serve the world—not to please it. A few wise, calm, disinterested men he always had the good hap to please and satisfy. By their judgment he desires still to be determined; and, if he has any pride, it is that he may be approved by such.' To the rest he sedately says, their censure deserves no notice." So, through all the vicissitudes of men and ministries, from 1704 to 1713, amid all the contentions and shouts of party, he kept with this homely weapon a single-handed way—a solitary watchman at the portals of the commonwealth."

With the 'Review,' in which Defoe addressed to the people his own earnest thoughts upon all matters that concerned the common good, begins the history of English journalism as a power in the State and a reflection of the people's influence on English literature. To much vigorous argument on grave affairs of state, Defoe united censorship of social follies by including in his plan the machinery of a supposed Scandalous

Club, for hearing and deciding on domestic questions. To this part of the 'Review' it will be seen that we may trace most reasonably Richard Steele's first notion of the 'Tatler.'

When Addison and Steele had successively passed to Oxford from the Charterhouse, where they had been school-fellows and friends together, the paths by which they Addison in the way of patronage. took their way into the world were widely separate. Addison thought it best to provide for his own future advancement by securing influential patrons. He therefore, after the campaign of 1695, offered to the King the homage of a paper of verses on the capture of Namur, and presented them through Sir John Somers, then Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. To Lord Somers he sent with them a flattering dedicatory address. Discernment of talent was at this time a merit for which more than one political Mæcenas gladly earned credit to himself. Preferments, lesser public trusts, and sinecures were readily bestowed on men of letters friendly to the party of the giver, until the accession of George I., happily for literature, removed the Court from all contact with the wit or wisdom of the country. Somers, who was esteemed a man of taste, was not unwilling to "receive the present of a Muse unknown." He asked Addison to call upon him, and became his patron. Charles Montagu, afterwards Earl of Halifax, critic and wit himself, shone also among the statesmen who were known patrons of letters. Also to him, who was a prince of patrons, "fed with soft dedication all day long," Addison introduced himself. Montagu had not long before risen to the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer; he had just then been busy over recoinage and the project of the Sinking Fund; he was a wit and patron of wits seated in the national Tom Tidler's ground. To him, as it was part of his public fame to be a Latin scholar, Addison, also a skilful Latinist, addressed, in Latin, a paper of verses on the Peace of Ryswick. With Somers and Montagu for patrons, the young man of genius who wished to thrive might fairly commit himself to the service of the Church, but Addison's tact and refinement promised to be serviceable to the State; and so it was that, as Steele tells us, Montagu made Addison a layman. "His arguments were founded upon the general pravity and corruption of men of business, who wanted liberal education. And I remember, as

if I had read the letter yesterday, that my Lord ended with a compliment, that, however he might be represented as no friend to the Church, he never would do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it." To the good offices of Montagu and Somers Addison was indebted, therefore, for a travelling allowance of three hundred a year. The grant was for his support while qualifying himself on the Continent by study of modern languages, and otherwise, for diplomatic service. It dropped in a year or two, at the King's death, and Addison was cast upon his own resources; but he throve, and lived to become an Under-Secretary of State in days that made Prior an ambassador, and rewarded with official incomes Congreve, Rowe, Hughes, Philips, Stepney, and others. Throughout his honourable career prudence dictated to Addison more or less of dependence on the friendship of the strong. An honest friend of the popular cause, he was more ready to sell than give his pen to it; although the utmost reward would at no time have tempted him to throw his conscience into the bargain. The good word of Halifax obtained him from Godolphin the Government order for a poem on the Battle of Blenheim, with immediate earnest of payment for it in the office of a Commissioner of Appeal in the Excise, worth 200*l.* a year. For this substantial reason, Addison wrote 'The Campaign;' and upon its success, he obtained the further reward of an Irish Under-Secretaryship. In his later years, when, after the Rebellion in the North, Addison fought the battle of his party as 'The Freeholder,' it was again not on his own free impulse that he wrote, but as the popular and discreet man of genius appointed to write by the Government, who, as it seemed to Steele, "made choice of a flute when they ought to have taken a trumpet."

Steele, on the contrary, fastened upon the duties of life with no immediate regard to patronage. He never joined a calculation of reward to the discovering or doing of what he took to be his duty to the country. His mind belonged entirely to the English people. At Oxford his wit had shown its bent, for he had written a comedy. But he burnt this upon being told that it had little merit. Not knowing what his words were worth, he gave himself up bodily to the service of his country, and, in days of change perilous to England at home and

Steele  
represents  
the people.

abroad, resolved to bear arms in her service. As a soldier he would, according to his own phrase, "plant himself behind King William against Louis XIV." True Englishman, he chose the way of life in which it seemed to him that he could best use his powers for the common good; and this he did at the cost of a good Welsh estate, whereof he was disinherited for his patriotism by an offended relative. The same unselfish determination to give himself up to the service of his country caused him, when, fatherless as he was, he could not get a commission, to enlist as a private in the Horse Guards. Accomplished, genial, and zealous, with the soul a gentleman, such a private as Richard Steele was soon the brother of his regiment. Its colonel made him his private secretary, gave him a cornetcy, and got him afterwards, as Captain Steele, a company of Fusileers. Among his brother soldiers, and fresh from the Oxford worship of old classical models, the religious feeling that accompanies all true refinement, and that was indeed part of the English nature in him as in Addison, prompted Steele to write, for his own private occupation, a little book upon 'The Christian Hero.' In it he opposed to the fashionable classicism of his day a sound reflection that the heroism of Cato or Brutus had far less in it of true strength, and far less adaptation to the needs of life, than the unfashionable Christian heroism set forth by the Sermon on the Mount. The old bent of the English mind was strong in Richard Steele, and he gave unostentatiously a lively wit to the true service of religion, without having spoken or written to the last day of his life one word of mere religious cant. But his comrades felt, and he himself saw, that 'The Christian Hero,' published in 1701, was too didactic. It was indeed plain truth out of Steele's heart; but an air of superiority, freely allowed only to the professional man teaching rules of his own art, belongs to a too didactic manner. Nothing was more repugnant to Steele's nature than the sense of this. He had defined the Christian as "one who is, always a benefactor, with the mien of a receiver." And that was his own character, of which the one fault was, that he was more ready to give than to receive, more prompt to ascribe honour to others than to claim it for himself. To right himself, Steele wrote a light-hearted comedy, 'The Funeral, or Grief à la Mode;' but at the core even of that

lay the great earnestness of his censure against the mockery and mummery of griefs that should be sacred; and he blended with this, in the character of lawyer Puzzle, a protest against mockery of truth and justice by the intricacies of the law. Of these he wrote, in his preface to the published play, "the daily villanies we see committed will also be esteemed things proper to be prosecuted by satire; nor could our ensuing legislatures do their country a more seasonable office than to look into the distresses of an unhappy people, who groan perhaps in as much misery under entangled as they could do under broken laws." The liveliness of this comedy made Steele popular with the wits; and the inevitable touches of the author's patriotism brought on him also the notice of the Whigs. Party men might, perhaps, already feel something of the unbending independence that was in Steele himself, as in this play he made old Lord Brumpton teach it to his son:—

"But be thou honest, firm, impartial;  
Let neither love, nor hate, nor faction move thee;  
Distinguish words from things, and men from crimes."

King William perhaps, had he lived, could fairly have recognised in Steele the social form of that sound mind which, in Defoe, was solitary. In a later day it was to Steele a proud recollection that his name, to be provided for, "was in the last table-book ever worn by the glorious and immortal William III."

The stage yet represented, although less completely than it had done, the place of direct appeal from a writer to the body of the public. Shakespeare had written for the people; Congreve now wrote for the town. Players of Elizabeth's day carried their pieces out of London, even into Germany; and in London itself addressed the common heart of those who formed before their stage a natural audience, distinguished largely by some of its elements from the polite body of the arbiters of artificial taste. At the Restoration the court patronage brought to the theatre that small circle of conventional wits who held themselves to be especially the town; and soon the lives and manners of the new order of patrons were more commonly reflected from the stage than the old large types of

Decreased  
influence of  
the people on  
the stage.

human character and passion. Popular interest in the stage, partly diverted from it at the same time by the growth of other influences, chiefly for this reason abated; and many who would have been good play-goers a century earlier, in Queen Anne's days, out of the same mind that would have made them so, stayed at home and read, not without approbation, Jeremy Collier's sharp attack upon stage immorality. Steele's wit took naturally the old popular course, and disported itself for a short time upon the stage, but his comedies, with all their gaiety and humour, wanted the taint of immorality that was the game flavour then accounted necessary to the perfect relish of a play. Each comedy of Steele's was based on seriousness, as all sound English wit has been since there have been writers in England. The gay manner did not conceal all the earnest thoughts that might jar with the humour of the town; and thus Steele was able to claim, by right of his third play—a comedy in which no modern reader would discover preaching—"the honour of being the only English dramatist who had had a piece damned for its piety."

With that strong regard for the drama which cannot well be wanting to the man who has an artist's vivid sense of life, Steele never withdrew his good will from the The 'Tatler.' players, never neglected to praise a good play, and, as we have seen, took every fair occasion of suggesting to the town the subtlety of Shakespeare's genius. But single-minded, quick-witted, and prompt to act on the first suggestion of a higher point of usefulness to which he might attain, Steele saw the mind of the people ready for a new sort of relation to its writers, and he followed the lead of Defoe. But though he turned from the more frivolous temper of the enfeebled playhouse audience, to commune in free air with the country at large, he took fresh care for the restraint of his deep earnestness within the bounds of a cheerful, unpretending influence. Drop by drop it should fall, and its strength lie in its persistence. He would bring what wit he had out of the playhouse, and speak his mind, like Defoe, to the people themselves every post-day. But he would affect no pedantry of moralising, he would appeal to no passions, he would profess himself only "a Tatler." Might he not use,

he thought, modestly distrustful of the charm of his own mind, some of the news obtained by virtue of the office of Gazetteer Harley had given him, to bring weight and acceptance to that writing of his that he valued only for the use to which it could be put. For, as he himself truly says in the 'Tatler,' "wit, if a man had it, unless it be directed to some useful end, is but a wanton, frivolous quality; all that one should value himself upon in this kind is that he had some honourable intention in it."

Swift, not then a deserter to the Tories, was a friend of Steele's, who, when the first 'Tatler' appeared, had been amusing the town at the expense of John Partridge, astrologer and almanac-maker, with "Predictions for the year 1708," professing to be written by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq. The first prediction was of the death of Partridge, "on the 29th of March next, about eleven at night, of a raging fever." Swift answered himself, and also published in due time 'The Accomplishment of the first of Mr. Bickerstaff's Predictions: Being an account of the death of Mr. Partridge, the almanack-maker, upon the 29th instant.' Other wits kept up the joke, and, in his next year's almanac (that for 1709), Partridge advertised that, "whereas it has been industriously given out by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., and others, to prevent the sale of this year's almanack, that John Partridge is dead, this may inform all his loving countrymen that he is still living, in health, and they are knaves that reported it otherwise." Steele gave additional lightness to the touch of his 'Tatler,' which first appeared on the 12th of April, 1709, by writing in the name of Isaac Bickerstaff, and carrying on the jest, that was to his serious mind a blow dealt against prevailing superstition. Referring in his first 'Tatler' to this advertisement of Partridge's, he said of it, "I have in another place, and in a paper by itself, sufficiently convinced this man that he is dead; and if he has any shame, I do not doubt but that by this time he owns it to all his acquaintance. For though the legs and arms and whole body of that man may still appear and perform their animal functions, yet since, as I have elsewhere observed, his art is gone, the man is gone." To Steele, indeed, the truth was absolute, that a man is but what he can do.

In this spirit, then, Steele began the 'Tatler,' simply considering that his paper was to be published "for the use of the good people of England," and professing at the outset that he was an author writing for the public, who expected from the public payment for his work, and that he preferred this course to gambling for the patronage of men in office. Having pleasantly shown the sordid spirit that underlies the mountebank's sublime professions of disinterestedness, "we have a contempt," he says, "for such paltry barterers, and have therefore all along informed the public that we intend to give them our advices for our own sakes, and are labouring to make our lucubrations come to some price in money, for our more convenient support in the service of the public. It is certain that many other schemes have been proposed to me, as a friend offered to show me in a treatise he had writ, which he called, 'The whole Art of Life; or, The Introduction to Great Men, illustrated in a Pack of Cards.' But being a novice at all manner of play, I declined the offer."

Relation of  
the 'Tatler'  
to the  
people.

Addison took these cards, and played an honest game with them successfully. But it was only when, having laid them down for a time, and bringing his sound mind and perfect humour to the aid of his friend Steele, he came with him into direct relation with the English people, that he wrote those papers in 'Tatler,' 'Spectator,' and 'Guardian,' wherein alone his genius abides with us, and will abide with English readers to the end. The 'Tatler,' the 'Spectator,' and the 'Guardian,' were, all of them, Steele's papers, begun and ended by him at his sole discretion. In these three journals Steele wrote 510 papers; Addison, 369. Swift wrote two papers, and sent about a dozen fragments. Congreve wrote one article in the 'Tatler;' Pope wrote twice for the 'Spectator' and eight times for the 'Guardian.' Addison, who was in Ireland when the 'Tatler' first appeared, only guessed the authorship by an expression in an early number; and it was not until eighty numbers had been issued, and the character of the new paper was formed and established, that Addison, on his return to London, joined the friend who, with his usual complete absence of the vanity of self-assertion, finally ascribed to the ally he dearly loved, the honours of success.

Addison,  
drawn by  
Steele into  
co-operation,  
writes for  
the people,  
better than  
for patrons.  
'Tatler,'  
'Spectator,'  
'Guardian.'



It was the kind of success Steele had desired,—a widely-diffused influence for good. The ‘Tatlers’ were penny papers published three times a week, and issued also for another half-penny with a blank half-sheet for transmission by post, when any written scraps of the day’s gossip that friend might send to friend could be included. It was through these, and the daily ‘Spectators’ which succeeded them, that the people of England really learnt to read. The few leaves of sound reason and fancy were but a light tax on uncultivated powers of attention. Exquisite grace and true kindness, here associated with familiar ways and common incidents of everyday life, gave many an honest man fresh sense of the best happiness that lies in common duties honestly performed, and a fresh energy, free as Christianity itself from malice—for so both Steele and Addison meant that it should be—in opposing themselves to the frivolities and small frauds on the conscience by which manliness is undermined.

There was high strife of faction, and there was real peril to the country by a possible turn of affairs after Queen Anne’s death, that another Stuart restoration, in the name of divine right of kings, would leave the rights of the people to be reconquered in civil war. The chiefs of either party were appealing to the people, and engaging all the wit they could secure to fight on their side in the war of pamphlets. Steele’s heart was in the momentous issue. Both he and Addison had it in mind while they were blending their calm playfulness with all the clamour of the press. The spirit in which these friends worked young Pope must have felt; for after Addison had helped him in his first approach to fame by giving an essay in the ‘Spectator’ to his ‘Essay on Criticism,’ and when he was thankful for that service, the verses he contributed to the ‘Spectator’ were ‘Messiah’ and ‘The Dying Christian to his Soul.’ Such offerings clearly showed how Pope interpreted the labour of the essayists.

In the fens of Lincolnshire the antiquary Maurice Johnson collected his neighbours of Spalding. “Taking care,” it is said, “not to alarm the country gentlemen by any premature mention of antiquities, he endeavoured at first to allure them into the more flowery paths of literature. In 1709 a few of them

were brought together every post-day at the coffee-house in the Abbey Yard; and after one of the party had read aloud the last published number of 'The Tatler,' they proceeded to talk over the subject among themselves."

Even in distant Perthshire "the gentlemen met after church on Sunday to discuss the news of the week; the 'Spectators' were read as regularly as the 'Journal.'" So the political draught of bitterness came sweetened with the wisdom of good-humour. The good-humour of the essayists touched with a light and kindly hand every form of affectation, and placed everything in the light in which it would be seen by a natural and honest man. A sense of the essentials of life was assumed everywhere in the reader, who was asked only to smile charitably at its vanities. Steele looked through all shams to the natural heart of the Englishman, appealed to that, and found it easily enough, even under the disguise of the young gentleman cited in the 77th 'Tatler,' "so ambitious to be thought worse than he is that in his degree of understanding he sets up for a freethinker, and talks atheistically in coffee-houses all day, though every morning and evening, it can be proved upon him, he regularly at home says his prayers."

But as public events led nearer to the prospect of a Jacobite triumph that would have again brought Englishmen <sup>Steele's</sup> against each other sword to sword, there was no voice <sup>'Englishman.'</sup> of warning more fearless than Richard Steele's. He changed the 'Spectator' for the 'Guardian,' that was to be, in its plan, more free to guard the people's rights, and, standing forward more distinctly as a politician, he became member for Stockbridge. Then, when the Peace of Utrecht alarmed English patriots, Steele in a bold pamphlet on 'The Crisis' expressed his dread of arbitrary power and a Jacobite succession with a boldness that cost him his seat in Parliament. For 'The Guardian,' which he had dropped when he felt the plan of that journal unequal to the right and full expression of his mind, Steele now took for a periodical the name of 'Englishman,' and under that name fought, with then unexampled abstinence from personality, against the principles upheld by Swift in his 'Examiner.' When the change was made, Mr. Hughes wrote on the 6th of October, 1713, to Mr. Addison a letter that begins in

this way:—"Dear sir, I do not doubt but you know by this time that Mr. Steele has abruptly dropped 'The Guardian.' He has published this day a paper called 'The Englishman,' which begins with an answer to 'The Examiner,' written with great boldness and spirit, and shows that his thoughts are at present entirely on politics. Some of his friends are in pain about him, and are concerned that a paper should be discontinued which might have been generally entertaining without engaging in party matters." Mr. Hughes did not understand their friend, who, as a man of letters, in his lightest vein had never cared to be no more than "generally entertaining." Addison knew him. Steele and Addison first became friends, no doubt, through likeness of humour in diversity of character that gave to each a quality admired, but not possessed, by his companion. But the close and lasting confidence came of their common allegiance to the highest principle of action. And it may well be that Addison, with all his sense of prudence, never had a more lively honour for Steele's manliness than when he replied to the regrets of Mr. Hughes, while civilly declining the proposal to join him in an attempt to revive 'The Guardian' in some other form. "In the mean time I should be glad if you would set such a project on foot, for I know nobody else capable of succeeding in it, and turning it to the good of mankind, since my friend has laid it down. I am in a thousand troubles for poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous to himself; but he has sent me word that he is determined to go on, and that any advice I may give him in this particular will have no weight with him."

As I am here only rapidly sketching the main outline of that period of popular influence in English literature which owes so much of its health to the sound minds of Steele and Addison, I ought not perhaps now to touch upon the grounds assigned by some subsequent writers for the misplaced pity of so wholesome and true a man as Richard Steele. I will be content therefore to name them. Publication of his most sacred and private notes has proved that after marriage he remained the faithful and devoted lover of his wife, and with an exquisite gentleness bore every impatient word of hers, while yielding to every caprice that did not clash with his own liberal sense of honour. Item, he was a

bad party man, who would sacrifice at any time his friends or himself to an independent sense of duty. "Principles are out of the case," said Swift; "we dispute wholly about persons." To which Steele answered, "The dispute is not about persons, but about things and causes." And so, in his steady pursuit of abstract right, he lost places that were given him, missed places that he might have had, and was, if worldly success be the aim of public life, an utterly imprudent politician. Finally and especially, he did not become rich. Liberal always of his own to others, he was sometimes without a guinea, and sometimes in debt. Of which it is enough to say that he defrauded no man, that when he followed his Prue to the grave he was in no man's debt, though he left all his countrymen his debtors, and that he left untouched their mother's fortune to his two surviving children.

The influence of French literary taste on Addison had been overcome by his own nature and the influence of <sup>Pope.</sup> Steele, except in as far as it gave scholarly accuracy and a slight dash of the Latin manner to his English. The French influence on Pope was modified also by his shrewd native sense. Pope sought reputation. As a Roman Catholic he was excluded from place, and, reputation being more to him than money, he refused a pension. Depending on his wit to win for him a place among their poets from the English people, as far as the limited education of the public in his day could bring them into relation to him, he wrote under popular influence. Faithful, therefore, to good natural sense, he in his own way wrote as an Englishman for England, and his fame survives. Subject and treatment differing, there is the same war against all that is not what it pretends to be in 'Dunciad' and 'Tatler.'

Through 'Tatler' and 'Spectator' the main stream of English literature ran in Queen Anne's reign. In the reign of George I. the representative books were 'Robinson Crusoe' and 'Gulliver's Travels.' The reading public was enlarged. From the little tales and apologues interspersed by Steele and Addison among their essays, it could pass to longer tales if there were any it could read; but it could not read 'Parthenissa' or the translated romances of Madame Scudéry. No, nor, with all its appreciation of morality, could

Development  
of prose  
fiction—  
'Robinson  
Crusoe' and  
'Gulliver.'

it read Dr. Nathanael Ingelo's 'Bentivoglio and Urania,' a book designed to turn to reasonable account one of "the impertinencies of mankind, viz. the Writing and Reading of Romances," by making allegorical characters of body, soul, and their faculties, and so reviving the old stage moralities in the ten thousand times more tedious form of a long highflown romance of the school of the *Précieuses*. Aphra Behn had improved upon the French model in her novelets, but they had not substance of mind to contend with the imposing seriousness of 'Polexander' and the 'Grand Cyrus.' Books of this class, therefore, were still alive to be laughed at by Steele, when in 'The Tender Husband' he introduces the fair Biddy Pipkin, with her mind fed upon such meat. *She*: "I don't know how to own it, but they have called me Bridget. *He*: Bridget? *She*: Bridget. *He*: Bridget? *She*: Spare my confusion, I beseech you, sir; and if you have occasion to mention me, let it be by Parthenissa, for that's the name I have assumed ever since I came to years of discretion." Alack-a-day, little Bridget! *She*: "Alas, sir, what can be expected from an innocent virgin, that has been immured almost one-and-twenty years from the conversation of mankind, under the care of an Urganda of an aunt. *He*: Bless me, madam, how you have been abused! Many a lady before your age has had an hundred lances broke in her service, and as many dragons cut to pieces in honour of her. *She* (aside): Oh, the charming man! *He* (who is playing on her weakness): Do you believe that Pamela was one-and-twenty before she knew Musidörus?"

In 'Robinson Crusoe' Defoe gave the people such a story as they could enjoy. That tale begins the history of modern English fiction, as distinctly as Defoe's 'Review' began the history of that English journalism which is the familiar expression of immediate relations between English writers and the main body of English readers. Four years earlier Defoe had written his last political essay, and 'Robinson Crusoe' was now the first of a series of tales that applied fancy in the most direct way to the acts and thoughts of daily natural life. This was a wholesome reaction from the old mockery of high flown romance. It is true that the play of Defoe's fancy was too apt at an exact suggestion of the real to

also within the wide province of fiction. But there followed, four years after 'Robinson Crusoe,' Swift's marvellous out-pouring of his own sense of life in the story of 'Gulliver's Travels,' a satire that carries even the child's fancy captive, and that would not win its way with children as it does, if Swift had not here as everywhere worked with a warm heart, ill-concealed under his scornful wit.

Nevertheless, Parthenissa and Pamela and all their tribe maintained their ground, and still, as in Steele's earlier day, Lettice, the waiting-maid, wept as she read by Richardson's 'Pamela.' her small candle the piteous tales. "Well, in all these distresses and misfortunes, the faithful Argalus was rer own'd all over the plains of Arca—Arca—Arcadia—for his loyal and true affection to his charming paramour, Parthenia. Blessings on his heart for it! there's no such suitors now-a-days." Here Lettice weeps. But worthy, well-meaning, ingenious Mr. Richardson, now in the reign of George II., means to provide both Lettice and her mistress with more honest fare. He will take that romantic name of Pamela, will give it to a modern servant-maid, and show for the instruction of all young ladies, in something better than romance morals, how virtuously this humble girl of the people can resist the blandishments of her master, and how she can be saved miraculously from all his base plots, though certainly it is all to the end that she may have the reward of being made a fine lady as the rascal's honest wife. Much of the literary purpose of the novelist had been attained far better by Defoe, but the purpose attested the strength of the growing popular influence upon literature. The great fault of Pamela was that, with large pretension, and especially the affectation of superior morality paraded on the title-page, and in a fine preliminary flourish, Richardson in fact exhibited only a virtue acting from low motives, under conditions more suggestive than even the old romances had been of immodest thoughts.

The true merit of 'Pamela' was that it provoked Fielding, who had till then carried his sense of life and manners to Fielding. imperfect expression on the stage, to begin, as a caricature of that virtuous serving-maid Pamela, the tale of the virtuous serving-man 'Joseph Andrews,' which soon grew under his hand into something freer and nobler than a caricature. It

appeared as his first novel, prefaced with the sound doctrine that was his literary creed, that affectation, untruth, is the only just mark for the satirist. Six years later Richardson placed himself above ridicule by his 'Clarissa Harlowe;' and then, in the year following, 1749, Fielding published his 'Tom Jones,' assuredly the best of English novels, and a work perfect as one of Shakespeare's.

As perfect in construction, and as perfect in its sense of life and character. It may be a small matter to find good construction in a work of genius, if the author has failed in the constructor's very first requisite, the choice of a good, durable building material. A whipped syllabub may be as perfect in construction as the Parthenon, and there are doubtless people of certain taste who would prefer the syllabub. A carpenter building a pigsty may—if our criticism be confined to these particulars—be found to construct a work more perfect than St. Peter's. So there are novels and again novels. No critic has ever praised the skilful construction of the story of 'Tom Jones;' but the durability of the work depends on something even of more moment than its construction,—upon the imperishable character of its material, and on the security with which its foundations are laid, deep in the true hearts of Englishmen.

Fielding's first novel was provoked by an affectation; and it was prefaced with a distinct explanation of his own "idea of romance." In the first pages of his first novel he taught that "the only source of the true ridiculous is affectation." His jest was against insincerity in all its lighter forms; his power was against untruth. In all his novels, and in 'Tom Jones' most conspicuously, a generous and penetrating mind familiar with the ways of men dealt mercifully with all honest infirmities, sympathised with human goodness, and reserved its laughter, or its scorn, only for what was insincere. In 'Tom Jones,' a work was planned upon the ample scale to which readers had become accustomed. There was room for a wide view of life. The scene was divided fairly between country and town. The story was built out of the eternal truths of human nature, and was exquisitely polished on its surface with a delicate and genial humour that suggested rather than preached censure on the

follies of society in England, not unmixed with the directest Christian condemnation against crime.

The very soul of the book enters into the construction of 'Tom Jones.' The picture of a good man, coloured by Fielding with some of the warmth of living friendship, is presented at once in Squire Allworthy; and there is a deep seriousness in the manner of presenting him on a May morning, walking upon the terrace before his mansion with a wide prospect around him, planning a generous action, when "in the full blaze of his majesty up rose the sun, than which one object alone in this lower creation could be more glorious, and that Mr. Allworthy himself presented—a human being replete with benevolence, meditating in what manner he might render himself most acceptable to his Creator, by doing most good to His creatures."

The two boys bred by Allworthy, Tom Jones and Blifil, about whom the whole story revolves, are as the two poles of Fielding's mimic world. One of them is everybody's friend but his own; the other nobody's friend but his own. One is possessed of natural goodness, with all generous impulses, but with instincts, as we are once or twice distinctly reminded, wanting the control of prudence and religion. He lies open to frequent heavy blame, and yet more frequent misconstruction; yet we have faith in him because he is true, his faults are open, his affections warm. We know that time and love will make a noble man of him. The other conceals treachery under a show of righteousness and justice. His fair outside of religion and morality, the readiness with which he gives an honest colouring to all appearances, are represented wholly without caricature. His ill deeds are secret, his affections cold, and he is base to us by reason of his falsehood. Let us in mature life read the book afresh, and while we come from the work with the old admiration of the sterling English in which it is written, and of the keen but generous insight into human character that animates every page, we probably shall find that we have strengthened greatly our sense of its brave morality. It may surprise a critic who tastes evil in the scenes of incontinence which the manners of his age permitted Fielding to include among his pictures of the life about him to be told that they were not presented as jests by their author. Fielding differs in this, as in many things, essentially



from Smollett, that in his novels he has never used an unclean image for its own sake as provocative of mirth in ruder minds. In Fielding's page evil is evil. In 'Tom Jones' Allworthy delivers no mock exhortations; whenever Jones falls into incontinence the purity of Sophia follows next upon the scene, a higher happiness is lost, and his true love is removed farther from his reach. And at last the youth is made to assent to Sophia, when she replies, very gravely, upon his pleading of the grossness of his sex, the delicacy of hers, and the absence of love in amour: "I will never marry a man who shall not learn refinement enough to be as incapable as I am myself of making such a distinction."

Again, what can be more determined than the purpose underlying the invention of the theologian and the philosopher, Thwackum and Square, as tutors of Jones and Blifil.

In the account given by Fielding himself of the requisite qualities of the man who is "to invent good stories and tell them well," we find named after genius and study "a quick and sagacious penetration into the true essence of all the objects of our contemplation," and, of course, conversation with men. "Nor," he adds, "will all the qualities I have hitherto given my historian avail him, unless he have what is generally meant by a good heart, and be capable of feeling."

I can only express here by a few hints the perfectness of mind and body in this book. The episodes are as true limbs of it. It is not merely variety that they supply. It is completeness. In evidence of this it may be quite sufficient to refer to the one episode really open to a moment's doubt. It is true that the Man of the Hill's story is not a part of the direct mechanism of the plot; but it is equally true that it is a vital part of the whole epic history. Only by episode could there have been interpolated between Jones's generous and Blifil's ungenerous principle of intercourse with other men, the picture of one who has wholly withdrawn himself from human intercourse, and dares to solve the question of life's duties by looking from afar with scorn upon his fellows. He had a false lover, a false friend. "What better, my good sir," asks Jones, "could you expect in love derived from the stews, or in friendship first produced and nourished at the gaming-table?" And the brave

manly lesson of life taught by the whole work closes an episode in the directest harmony with the inventor's main design.

It is a minor excellence that this part of the work has been contrived also to supply to the large study of English life those chapters, excluded from the main action of the tale by the peculiar education and the characters of Jones and Blifil, which paint the follies of youth at the University and the life of the gambler. Partridge once breaks upon the narrative of the Man of the Hill with a characteristic story of his own, in which Fielding commands wise reflection on the undefended state of criminals tried for their lives. We pass, however, from the greater to the less in touching on these things, although they show how intimate was here the relation of the English writer to the English people.

The lesser critics in polite society, who applied not their own minds, nor the minds of better thinkers, but the mere words of those better thinkers twisted and crushed into a critical jargon, to the estimate of works of intellect, still held in a degenerate way to the classicism of Paris. They decreed natural pictures of life and plain English "low." Fielding was in their eyes "low," and several times in 'Tom Jones' the great novelist takes in mockery this word out of their mouths. Goldsmith, too, born twenty-one years later than Fielding, we find harping on the word in playful, kindly scorn. But, when we look back to Goldsmith, at his side we see the figure of that elder friend, but two years younger than Fielding,—the strong, tender-hearted Samuel Johnson. How sound a mind he kept within a body by whose physical infirmities he should have been made insane! Johnson was ten years old in the year of Addison's death, and twenty years old in the year of the death of Steele. Of English writers none fought more sturdily and honestly than he in the war of intellectual independence. He began literary life in London as what printer Bowyer called "an author of the lower class, one of those who are paid by the sheet," subsisted upon fourpence halfpenny a day, ate only what he earned. Conquering the resistance of the adverse world and of his own adverse bodily state, he fought the hard uphill fight for himself, for others with him, and for all the writers who came after him, and

The French  
taste of the  
lesser critics.

Samuel  
Johnson.

made himself, until his death in 1784, the worthy central figure in the literature of his country. His intellect alone would not have given him, ungainly man as he was, this rank in a day when the profession of letters was so little honoured that some such apology as the "accidental elopement of a composition" was thought necessary to excuse a gentleman for coming into print. In Johnson's days we find even the poet Gray, after his 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' much handed about over polite tea-tables, had fallen into the hands of an editor who vowed that he would print it, writing of that piece of true literature to his friend Walpole, "I have but one bad way left to escape the honour they would inflict upon me, and therefore am obliged to desire you would make Dodsley print it immediately (which may be done in less than a week's time), from your copy, but without my name;" presently suggesting also, "If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by accident, I should like it better." Walpole wrote an advertisement to the effect that accident only brought the poem before the public, although an apology was unnecessary to any but the author. On which Gray wrote, "I thank you for your advertisement, which saves my honour."

It was in the honour of Samuel Johnson to be absolutely free from this false pride. His wit was rooted in the highest sense of duty, and complete sincerity of thought and word. There was a true English soul in Johnson's intellect. Milton himself did not more formally dedicate his powers to the service of his great taskmaster than Johnson, who prayed for a blessing on his work when he sat down to it, habitually, but never formally, as many will pray for a blessing on their roast meat who would think it wrong, because unusual, to ask a grace upon their words. It is not the form that is here dwelt upon. Men may pray without ceasing who never kneel, and never write or whisper formal words of prayer. Johnson prayed with his heart, and with the faithful pen through which he spoke his heart, and was in all as simply true as when he pitifully carried home on his back the unhappy prostitute whom he found lying exhausted in the streets. Johnson's strength with his countrymen lay in that inner worth to which Smollett's frank eyes at once penetrated. "This," he says, "was a very grave per-

sonage, whom at some distance I took for one of the most reserved and even disagreeable figures I had seen ; but, as he approached, his appearance improved, and, when I could distinguish him thoroughly, I perceived that, in spite of the severity of his brow, he had one of the most goodnatured countenances that could be imagined."

That Johnson, while drawing closer the relations between English writers and the English people, gave by his example a new life to the critical taste for sonorous Latin words not too much soiled by "low" associations, every one knows. The number of syllables in a word matters, however, infinitely less than its exact fitness to the measure of the thought it should express ; and by right of its conscientious precision Johnson's style will retain much of its power through all changes of fashion. "It would be terrible, sir," said Boswell, at Harwich, when he and Johnson were waiting for the boat to Helvoetsluys that was to take young Boswell to Utrecht, "it would be terrible if you should not find a speedy opportunity of returning to London, and be confined in so dull a place." *Johnson*.—"Don't, sir, accustom yourself to use big words for little matters. It would not be terrible, though I *were* to be detained some time here." Upon which passage Mr. Croker gave us his own measure as a critic, thus :—"This advice comes drolly from a writer who makes a young lady talk of 'the *cosmetic discipline*,' 'a regular *lustration* with beanflower-water, and the use of a pomade to *discuss* pimples and clear *discoloration*' ('Rambler,' No. 130) ; while a young gentleman tells us of 'the *flaccid* sides of a football having swelled into stiffness and extension.'" The critic here makes the too common mistake of confounding letter with spirit. Johnson looked at the honesty of words, and Croker at the number of their syllables. The words here quoted by Croker against Johnson are, as to their sense, like all the words he used, exactly of the same size as the thought they were used to express. Bliss, although four syllables shorter, was to Johnson's mind a bigger word than satisfaction ; and if his thought answered to the less word, an honest sense of literature, and of that which is the life of literature, kept his tongue and pen clear of the other. Mechanically speaking, he used big words ; intellectually and morally, no English is plainer

and more natural than Dr. Johnson's; and it is by the spirit rather than the letter that a writer lives.

Goethe tells us that when, aged twenty-five (and in the year Goldsmith's of Goldsmith's death), he was a law-student at Strasburg, influence on Goethe. Herder read to him a translation of the 'Vicar of Wakefield.' More than half a century after Goldsmith's death, when the German poet was by many regarded as the patriarch of contemporary European literature, he ascribed, in a letter to his friend Zelter, the best influence over his mind to the spirit of that wise and wholesome story as it was made known to him "just at the critical moment of mental development." In the 'Sorrows of Werter,' written in the same year, 1774, we have the record of this critical moment; and to the tone of melancholy which had deepened upon English literature Goethe partly ascribes the gathering of the clouds that Goldsmith's novel had helped to dispel.

There are moral epochs, Goethe said, under whose influence, Relations each in his own generation, the sensitive youth falls; between English and German literature. but the spirits of the German youth, when he himself was young, would not have tended so decidedly as they did to gloomy thought had there not been incitement from without. This came, he wrote (in Book 13 of 'Aus Meinem Leben'), "through the English literature, especially its poetry, whose best features are touched with an earnest melancholy that becomes transferred to all who study it." It was in Goethe's humour then to fasten on the melancholy side of any earnest feeling. But it is also true that the French influence upon our literature, in the decay of merely fashionable patronage, and before there were yet established sound relations between writers and the people, had given to metrical utterance of the religious English mind a turn for didactic gloom, of which Young's 'Night Thoughts' may be taken as the type. The whole literature of such a people as the English, if not of any people, must be more or less didactic; and the degree to which the inner earnestness is masked by manner of expression indicates only the wit and temper of the writer and his time.

In our literature following the Restoration, cultivation of Boileau's doctrine of "good sense," and gradual extension of the reading circle, helped greatly to the development of a

prose literature. Fielding, in his prose novels, exercised the creative force of genius with the perfection of good sense. Goldsmith, who had a reasoning imagination, wrote the graceful and clear prose of a true poet. At the same time, aiming only at perfect clearness in expression of historical and social facts, we have such men as David Hume, but three or four years younger than Fielding, and Robertson seven, and Adam Smith five years older than Goldsmith, whom both long survived. The prose mind, dealing with simple truth, found also its way into verse, uprooting in many directions the luxuriant wild-flowers of fancy, and clipping thought in the trim borders of a simply dull, didactic garden. Whole volumes of English poetry then recent could, said Goethe, be compressed into a commentary on this miserable impression of the end of man :—

“Then Old Age and Experience, hand in hand,  
Lead him to Death, and make him understand,  
After a search so painful and so long,  
That all his life he has been in the wrong.”

All that is cheerful in our literature was ascribed by Goethe to an earlier epoch ; and even here he observes that Shakespeare gave way to melancholy in his soliloquies, and that Milton could not rise, in *L'Allegro*, to a very moderate degree of cheerfulness until he had by a strong effort shaken off and banished his “loathed melancholy.” So it is, thought Goethe, that, in the later time, even the cheerful Goldsmith sinks, as Gray does in the ‘Country Churchyard,’ into elegiac sensibility when he paints *Paradise Lost* in his ‘Deserted Village.’ Goethe felt strongly those points in our literature to which his own mind was most sensitive ; but he was not the only German student of the English muse. The feebleness of development of German literature has at several periods received a strong and usually healthy influence from the vigour of the kindred race in England that thrives under conditions very favourable to free and emphatic speech. The influence of French critical taste had been as strong in Germany as in England ; but it had there taken a weak form. Polite personages at the German Courts seized bodily on the French language, and spoke it. From about the date of our Restoration till the time when

influence was so strong also in Germany that German writers have called this period "the *à-la-mode* age." But the same tyranny of style that justified Buffon's fallacious sentence, "The style is the Man," worked in each Germanic people towards similar results. England took the lead. The French taste was for clearness, and a literalness that in one form sought even to divest religion of its sacred mystery. In Germany, as in England, the tendency was to humanize this realism to the utmost.

In this direction, Defoe's 'Robinson Crusoe' represented so delightful a success, that, while it was reprinted and pirated at home, in Germany it was not merely translated, it had also more than forty imitators. There were two Westphalian Robinsons; there was a Saxon, a Silesian, a Franconian, a Bohemian Robinson; there were Robunse and Robinschen, Robinsonetta, the Moral Robinson, and the Invisible Robinson. Such books indeed, under the name of Robinsonades, form a distinct class in German literary history.

Direct battle was given at the same time to the French critical school in Germany, whereof the chief lawgiver was Johann Christian Gottsched—whose wife translated French plays and Pope's 'Rape of the Lock'—by a party of writers who argued for depth of feeling, truth of thought, as above the restraints of all mere formalism. Ranging themselves behind their leader, Johann Jacob Bodmer, of Zurich, these men raised the name of Milton for their battle-cry. For the ten years before 1740 Gottsched, at Leipzig, a scorner of Milton, dictated laws of taste to Germany. He did some service by maintaining much that was most wholesome in the fastidiousness of French critical rule; but he especially provoked the war in which he fell by strong and repeated attacks on the poetry of Milton in the last three years of his reign. In 1740 Bodmer replied boldly with an essay 'On the Wonderful in Poetry,' and then the war began. It was not, however, until twelve years afterwards that Bodmer produced, with commentaries, his German prose translation of 'Paradise Lost.' In all such literary battles, victory must be in the long run on the side of full and genuine expression. Bodmer fought no battle for mere imitation of the English. He laid open to his countrymen their own old national literature; he was the first editor

Germany fastens upon 'Robinson Crusoe.'

The spirit of Milton is abroad. Gottsched and Bodmer.

of the Nibelungenlied, and of the songs of the Minnesänger. He sought only the burning of the French peruke that had been set upon the German head.

Klopstock was the foremost of young German writers who, as a type of honour to sublimest earnestness, cherished the fame of Milton. Coleridge called him "a very German Milton." The phrase is true, and may be taken as a compliment. In all his writings Klopstock appears as a true son of his native soil, a Christian, and a German patriot.

While this strife gave vigour to a few, there were many who shared the natural reaction of mind that was strong in France itself, and was spreading in England, from a cold, critical tone that spent itself much upon questions of style, and discouraged passionate expression of the feelings. That temper of literature left the heart dissatisfied, and even took from the sense of religion too much of the warmth that lively exercise maintains. The chilled mind showed its gloomy discontent. Then Dr. Edward Young, singing immortal man, harped upon death, and lamentably peered through "darkness aiding intellectual light." When ancient traditions of the Gael seized on a mind thus pining, Fionn himself became a sign of the new sickness, and the ghost of Fingal stalked through the mist of the hills protesting against periwigs. While Bodmer—who delighted also in Sir Roger de Coverley, and had himself written a sort of German 'Spectator'—upheld Milton in South Germany, there was in North Germany Ebert, at Hamburg, who translated the 'Night Thoughts' and 'Ossian,' besides the 'Pamela' and 'Sir Charles Grandison' of our Richardson, who was dear also to Rousseau.

The French influence of which we have been speaking was not that of France as an abstraction, but of France as expressed by the French Court of Louis XIV. The reaction from it was universal, and nowhere more violent in certain directions than in France itself. Klopstock, in his old age warm for human liberty, received in 1792 the diploma of citizen from the French National Assembly, and a like compliment was paid to the patriotism of Gilles, otherwise Schiller. These were both men to shrink from the last excesses of the great French Revolution; but the stir that led to

Klopstock.

The revolt  
against Des-  
potism in  
Life or  
Literature.The revolt  
most violent  
in France.



it of independent human energies, shaking themselves, as they thought, free from the claws of despotism, was felt alike in Germany and France. And out of all its striving to be true came now the greatness of the German literature.

Goethe, the chief, although nearly the youngest, of the disciples of Bodmer, influenced deeply by the literature of this country, became by the force of his rare genius himself an influence. In his earliest notable work, 'Götz von Berlichingen,' in spite of all critical dramatic canons taking Shakespeare for his guide, he dealt honestly and freely, but throughout as a true German, with a picture of old German national life. His bent was, however, for the way of English melancholy, that enjoyed the pinch of a mind folded back upon itself. Always true to his own experiences of life and his own manner of thought, he worked out the megrims of his youth in 'Werter,' and, to the last, struggled boldly and unsuccessfully in his writings with the problems of man's inner life.

Goethe's mind was fixed on the life of the individual—Schiller's on that of the State. His 'Robbers,' grappling wildly with the question of social rights; his Republican tragedy of 'Fiesco;' his exaltation, in 'Kabale und Liebe,' of the German citizen world over the Court life steeped in French frivolity and vice; the glow of humanity in Marquis Posa, planted face to face with Spanish despotism; the great human struggle in his 'Wallenstein;' his choice of such subjects for dramatic handling as 'Tell' and the 'Maid of Orleans;'—all show how distinctly Schiller dwelt upon the rights of man as one of a community, while Goethe saw him as an individual, and dreamed or reasoned out the problem of his duties and his powers.

Of all the Germans, Goethe and those more formal thinkers who attempted to dissect the inner life of man had most influence upon the literature of England. The great German poet reflected back to us, intensified, the light, if it was light, he had received from us. In seizing upon his humour we caught, as it were, our own ball in its rebound. But there was a transmuting power where it struck; it went from us lead, and came back to us silver.

Edward Young was transmuted into William Wordsworth.

Limits of the  
German  
influence on  
English  
Literature.

What Klopstock and Kant at first hoped from the French Revolutionists, whose later friendship to himself Klopstock repelled with an abhorrent palinode—what seemed hope in them even to Alfieri, until, witness of their excesses, victim of their greed, he cursed them bitterly,—stirred also in the young hearts of our own Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey. How strongly Wordsworth himself felt we read in his ‘Prelude.’ The spirit of many an earnest poet in that time rises in his ‘Excursion’ from the melancholy recollections of the solitary :—

Wordsworth,  
Coleridge,  
and Southey.

“ Then my soul  
Turned inward, to examine of what stuff  
Time’s fetters are composed ; and life was put  
To inquisition, long and profitless !  
By pain of heart, now checked and now impelled,  
The intellectual power, through words and things,  
Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way !  
From that abstraction I was roused,—and how ? ”

By the fall of the Bastile, when—

“ From the wreck  
A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,  
The appointed seat of equitable law  
And mild paternal sway. The potent shock  
I felt : the transformation I perceived,  
As marvellously seized as in that moment  
When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld  
Glory—beyond all glory ever seen,  
Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,  
Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic harps  
In every grove were ringing, ‘ War shall cease ;  
Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured ?  
Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers, to deck  
The tree of Liberty.’ My heart rebounded ;  
My melancholy voice the chorus joined.”

Wordsworth went over to Paris, and spent a year between Paris, Orleans, and Blois. Much was said in England on that question of the rights of man in a community then raised with so much earnestness in France and Germany. Coleridge and Southey were at the age of twenty-three happy in the daydream of a life of patriarchal innocence upon the Susquehannah. Southey’s verse in those days fastened upon Joan of Arc, and at the age of eight-and-twenty, not long after his visit to North

Germany in company with Wordsworth, when the young English poets paid their visit to Klopstock, Coleridge was the translator of Schiller's 'Wallenstein.' The introspective spirit of Goethe was in Wordsworth healthier for its English setting and the poet's vigorous and close communion with nature. But like effects came in each country from like causes. The best English minds were in direct sympathy with all who would break the narrow bounds set to the liberty of person or of thought. The spirit of German literature now, therefore, attracted many to its study, and it became a concurrent influence in the literature of England. So, indeed, it has to this day continued; but its influence has at no time been dominant.

Byron's melancholy introspection that caused him to anathematize at twenty-two "The blight of life—the demon  
Byron. Thought," the recoil of his mind from formal civilization expressed by such writing as 'The Corsair,' and the painful struggle with the mightiest of the soul's problems in that wail of mankind before the Deluge, 'Heaven and Earth; a Mystery,' reproduce some of the moods of Goethe, for whom Faust expressed the poring of the mind on the great mystery of life. But in each case we have only the powerful expression of a common temper of the writer's time. The revolt against artificial systems of undue restraint blends, in the verse of Byron, even with his poet's sense of the natural world:—

"Dear Nature is the kindest mother still,  
Though always changing in her aspect mild;  
From her bare bosom let me take my fill,  
Her never wean'd, though not her favour'd child.  
Oh! she is fairest in her features wild,  
*Where nothing polish'd dares pollute her path:*  
To me by day or night she ever smiled,  
Though I have mark'd her when none other hath,  
And sought her more and more, and *loved her best in wrath.*"

Byron was born too late to feel how blood tingled in the days preceding the French Revolution. But the hour of vague bold aspiration was not over. To the Greeks, to whose cause his last days were dedicated, even at this age of twenty-two he addressed those lines, now as familiar to all ears as "the British Lion" or the "thin end of the wedge"—"Hereditary bondsmen, know ye not"—He was in more sympathy than he acknowledged with

the human world in which he learnt his harmonies. Tones of a whole choir of the poets of the previous half-century, English and German, may be heard in the rush of the closing stanza of his 'Ode on Waterloo:—

“ But the heart and the mind,  
And the voice of mankind,  
Shall arise in communion—  
And who shall resist that proud union?  
The time is past when swords subdued—  
Man may die—the soul's renew'd :  
Even in this low world of care  
Freedom ne'er shall want an heir ;  
Millions breathe but to inherit  
Her for ever bounding spirit—  
When once more her hosts assemble,  
Tyrants shall believe and tremble—  
Smile they at this idle threat?  
Crimson tears will follow yet.”

Certainly there was in all this tendency of thought a large and tumultuous addition to the influence of the people upon literature. With passionate hurry we were on the way that has been since followed, at least in Eng-  
land, calmly as the natural course, of a literature that is the true voice of the people's heart and mind.

Progress of  
the popular  
influence on  
literature.

The way to the liberties of England was secured. The quiet constitutional battle with George III. for due limitation of the King's prerogative involved no peril to society. As to the progress of legislation, the spirit of the times had made it not unreasonable in the Tory party to share the King's dread of “the hazard of innovation.” Since 1745 there had been no dispute concerning the succession, and now Whigs and Tories were both staunch supporters of the Crown. The Tories, indeed, supporting views of the Royal prerogative that tallied better than the Whig creed with the King's own views, became in an especial degree His Majesty's most loyal servants. Nothing remained to desire but the fighting out of every public question in fair battles of party : for such battles represented wholesome discussion of each act of change from opposite points of view, each view with its own portion of truth in it, and each entitled sometimes to prevail over the other. Let the press work itself free, stand honest interpreter between the people and the

Government, and health in the body politic would find a natural expression in the calm pulse of its literature.

Never perhaps was there a wholesomer English writer than Sir Walter Scott. He had begun his career of literature in 1796, at the age of five-and-twenty, as a translator of Bürger's 'Lenora' and 'Wild Huntsman;' two years afterwards he translated Goethe's drama of old knightly romance, 'Götz von Berlichingen;' but his pleasure in the union of strong feeling with simplicity that characterises all good ballads and romances was not to be satisfied alone with the romantic element in modern German literature. He went back to the Border Minstrelsy of his own country, and published his three volumes of it, which a critic said contained "the elements of a hundred historical romances." Then he grasped hands with old Thomas of Ercildoune, who, in the thirteenth century, was carried to her own land by the Queen of Faerie, and lived with her for three whole years. From Thomas the Rhymer, Scott at once, in 1805, passed to his own bright imagining of a 'Lay of the Last Minstrel,' that was the first of half-a-dozen modern gleeman's songs. Speech from the heart, and freedom from conventional restraints, of which men had grown weary, these songs had to recommend them. There was then refreshment in the simple, animated flow of story, whereof every turn was warmly felt and expressed in the light variable ballad metre. The metre itself breathed joyous defiance of the literary formalism that had delighted in trim evenness of couplet and nice balance of antithesis. Here were bold borderers who never wore peruke, and could have ridden to the field with Goetz of the Iron Hand himself:—

"They quitted not their harness bright,  
Neither by day, nor yet by night:  
They lay down to rest  
With corslet laced,  
Pillow'd on buckler cold and hard;  
They carved at the meal  
With gloves of steel,  
And they drank the red wine through the helmet barr'd."

When these metrical tales lost influence before the growing fame of Byron, Scott broke with rhyme, and began, in 1814, to pour out his prose romances. At least one, often two, in a year,

and in one year three, appeared for the next seventeen years without intermission, except in the single year 1830. Then the occasional historical and other work for which Scott found time, in addition to that spent on his romance-writing, had for once the whole year to itself, and he produced only two dramas, the *Letters on Demonology*, the fourth series of the '*Tales of a Grandfather*,' and the second volume of the '*History of Scotland*.' Nowhere in print was Scott so much a poet as in the earlier of his romances. His bright, cheerful fancy, his quick humour, his honest warmth of feeling, that aroused every healthy emotion without stirring a passion, exercised, in these incessantly recurring novels, an influence as gradual, as sure, and as well fitted to its time, as that which had been exercised by Steele and Addison in constantly recurring numbers of their '*Tatler*' and '*Spectator*.' There was a wide general public now able to fasten upon entertaining volumes. Scott widened it, and purified its taste. In Fenimore Cooper, the best of his imitators, we have the former strains caught up in a recurrence of the restless dream of an escape from civilization to imagined virtues of the undrilled savage in his state of nature. In Scott there is no form whatever of romantic discontent. His world was the same world of genial sympathies, in which, individually at least, we may all live if we will, and do live if we know it. He enjoyed the real, and sported with the picturesque. As he felt, he wrote, frankly and rapidly. Even his kindly Toryism was a wholesome influence. The Jacobites, so real to Defoe, amused the public now as the material of pleasant dreams; and the sunlight of Scott's fancy glistened upon rippling waters where the storm had menaced wreck.

Scott's novels were for seventeen years in effect so many parts of a great influential family periodical, fairly punctual to its half-yearly appearance. But a true journalism <sup>Development of Journalism.</sup> was then being developed into adequate expression of the English mind. To Newberry's '*Public Ledger*,' started in 1760, Goldsmith contributed his '*Citizen of the World*.' In 1763 Wilkes, in the '*North Briton*,' honestly printed all the letters in the names of persons commented upon, and suffered for his comments in No. 45 on the prorogation Speech after an unpopular peace. Of the *Letters of Junius*, in the '*Public*

*Advertiser*, the first appeared in April, 1767, the last in January, 1772, and these set an example of very bold political newspaper criticism. In trials that arose out of these letters Lord Mansfield sought in vain to deny to the jury the right of deciding what was libel, and what not, by confining its function to the question of publication. This question was not settled properly until the passing of Mr. Fox's Libel Bill in 1792. In 1769 the '*Morning Chronicle*' was first brought out by William Woodfall, who was especially the ear of England in the House of Commons. Victualled with a hard-boiled egg, he could sit out the longest debate, and next day write out for his paper, which he both printed and edited, the pith of all that he had heard. In 1772 appeared the '*Morning Post*,' of which the editor, in 1780, seceded to found a new paper, the '*Morning Herald*.' At this date there were no weekly papers.

On the 13th of January, 1785, appeared a paper in four pages, '*The Daily Universal Register*,' afterwards published, on the 1st of January, 1788, under the new name of '*The Times*,' which, as its proprietor announced, "being a monosyllable, bids defiance to corruptors and mutilators of the language." The '*Morning Advertiser*' first appeared in 1794; and in the year following there were in London fourteen daily papers, ten published three times a week, two twice a week, and twelve weekly; while the distribution of newspapers throughout the country had been increased sixfold by the introduction of mail-coaches.

In 1797 Canning and his friends started, as a weekly paper, the '*Anti-Jacobin*,' which had a brilliant career of eight months, with William Gifford, afterwards editor of the '*Quarterly Review*,' for manager. These journals had learnt to speak boldly upon public questions in the face of distinct peril to their writers. In the first year of '*The Times*,' its proprietor was sentenced to fine, imprisonment, and pillory for speaking his mind out upon the Duke of York. In the year following he was again prosecuted. The English journalists were, in fact, like the poets, bent upon full natural utterance, and upon the breaking down of all undue restraints. They were all more or less in earnest, and by their variety of temper and opinion represented then, as now, though less completely, the various

interests and humours that contribute their note to the common voice.

To such continual discussion there was added the new element of a representation of the deliberate thought of the most cultivated class upon all public questions, whether of politics or literature, by the establishment of 'The Edinburgh Review' in the year 1802. This incident in our literature is described by Sydney Smith in the preface to his afterwards collected Essays. For five years in Edinburgh, after his first entry into the Church, Sydney Smith says:—

"The principles of the French Revolution were then fully afloat, and it is impossible to conceive a more violent and agitated state of society. Among the first persons with whom I became acquainted were Lord Jeffrey, Lord Murray (late Lord Advocate for Scotland), and Lord Brougham; all of them maintaining opinions upon political subjects a little too liberal for the dynasty of Dundas, then exercising supreme power over the northern division of the island.

"One day we happened to meet in the eighth or ninth story or flat in Buccleugh-place, the elevated residence of the then Mr. Jeffrey. I proposed that we should set up a Review; this was acceded to with acclamation. I was appointed Editor, and remained long enough in Edinburgh to edit the first number of the 'Edinburgh Review.' The motto I proposed for the Review was—

*'Tenui musam meditamus avena.'*

'We cultivate literature upon a little oatmeal.'

But this was too near the truth to be admitted, and so we took our present grave motto from Publius Syrus, of whom none of us had, I am sure, ever read a single line; and so began what has since turned out to be a very important and able journal. When I left Edinburgh it fell into the stronger hands of Lord Jeffrey and Lord Brougham, and reached the highest point of popularity and success."

And of the work then to be done he adds a reminder that—

"The Catholics were not emancipated—the Corporation and Test Acts were unrepealed—the Game Laws were horribly oppressive—steel traps and spring guns were set all over the country—prisoners tried for their lives could have no counsel—Lord Eldon and the Court of Chancery pressed heavily upon mankind—libel was punished by the most cruel and vindictive imprisonments—the principles of Political Economy were little understood—the law of Debt and of Conspiracy were upon the worst possible footing—the enormous wickedness of the Slave Trade was tolerated—a thousand evils were in existence, which the talents of good and able men have since lessened or removed; and these effects have been not a little assisted by the honest boldness of the 'Edinburgh Review.'"

And not of the 'Edinburgh Review' only. Equal literary representation of both parties in the State was assured by the



establishment of the 'Quarterly Review' in 1808. Truth comes only of full argument, by earnest and equally skilful, honest advocates of differing opinion. Of each Review the true use was almost doubled by the existence of the other. Their influence has been felt throughout the whole extent of English journalism. Partly by their example, monthly, weekly, daily writers, and as the reading public enlarged while more interests claimed representation, fresh groups also of good quarterly essayists, have been taught to aim at careful, polished criticism upon men and books. They are the English journalists who have in these last years won for the English people liberty and full communication of opinion, not by their own separate skill, but simply by action for and with the English people, of which they are part.

From this point our argument is of the work of living men.

Extension  
of public  
education.  
Cheap  
popular  
literature.

Very much has been done by men of our own time in extension and improvement of the education of the masses, and in the establishment of cheap and wholesome literature for the classes newly added to the reading or the thinking public. The reading is much larger than the thinking public: its rewards are higher; and out of this fact comes the single drawback upon the many and great gains to be reckoned in the literary history of our own generation. But there is more to be said of the literary life of our own day, and of its tendencies, than this mere widely-dotted outline of the past enables me to say in brief with a sufficient clearness. Now, therefore, I shall attempt to explore at more leisure the ground of which we have thus hastily and partially observed the plan. Taking my own way of criticism—for the vice of systematic writings upon literature has been compilation of opinion—I shall believe of every man's work, that, if a good and a bad motive can be ascribed to it, it is the good one that is, in the nature of men, likely to be true. From a fuller study of its antecedents, we can then pass, with little fear of misunderstanding, to a free discussion of the literature of the present day in its relation to the public mind, and give full honour to all that has been done of late years for an advancement of the people in true reading power. Waste reading is not a power. But I do not consider that

Of some who  
have not yet  
learned to read  
or write.

waste reading which refreshes the intellect by giving lively occupation to the fancy, when we note how large an increase of reading power is yet possible, and very heartily to be desired. The mere habit of reading that must be acquired by the illiterate adult, or by the child, may indeed come more easily by the free use of a literature that would be waste for any other purpose. This consideration justifies, no doubt, the existence of a large mass of the commonplace productions of our day. But the habit of reading having been secured, the taste for the right sort of reading has in the next place also to be cultivated. John Foster, the essayist on Popular Ignorance, thought it strange that any man, while there lay within reach of his hand treasures of wit, should leave them untouched, and prefer to starve upon ephemeral and worthless books. The reason is, that the worth of a book lies in original thought, in independent play of fancy, in a delicate truth of expression, that can be fully appreciated only by men to whom it is not more natural to read than, when they read, to fasten upon their author with a habit of sustained attention.

Many people do not apply such a habit even to the common occupations of their lives; but even if there were many original in action, these seldom would be found to shine in talk. There is, also good reason why, in civilized conversation, men being rightly withheld from laying open their whole personalities, the mind must exercise itself chiefly in a play of conversational wit, which is a gift by itself, welcome as rare, but not of lasting value. Tiresome repetition of the same remarks on the same subjects are thus left, almost of necessity, to make up the round sum of common talk. Some, in the midst of such talk, who want wit and aspire to be thought clever, know certainly how to temper commonplace with scorn, and, if they pretend to it, will be allowed, very cheaply, a wide reputation for the smartness which is mistaken for a quick intelligence, by untrained minds. It is, in fact, the commonest attribute of an entire want of true intelligence; as we may learn from our smartly censorious race of ragged street-boys. The censorious humour is a mental corruption, that as surely breeds from poverty of thought as typhus from the bodily wants and dirt to which alone the doctors trace it. Thus, then, it is that the million of untrained readers, some

highly educated to the track in which their minds are set, more falling into any accessible track, and therein following their fellows, have the habit of intellectual attention dulled rather than sharpened by the constant grind of customary talk. When they come to their books they are soon fatigued, even by the exercise of following the commonplace thoughts of a writer who does not dilute sense with a copious outpouring of words. Original thought without a waste word in the expression of it—that is to say, good literature—is a burden they are only too glad to avoid. Commonplace thought, diffuse in the utterance, but flavoured throughout with a censorious smartness—that is to say, bad literature—for the same reason finds a ready market. Addison said that the habit of good reading was like that of smoking. There is a repugnance to get over before the taste is acquired, and great solace and enjoyment to come of the acquisition. Men who fight through their qualms to qualify as smokers might do as much to become readers.

Readers have multiplied, and writers with them. Extension of the reading circle has reduced the average of its school knowledge. The classical allusions and the scraps of learning that pleased Lyly's limited and courtly circle never could interest the million whom a writer seeking popularity in these days will endeavour to attract. Yet the reader without scholarship also expects to be entertained by one who can put forward some claim to particular regard. An immense region of print has to be occupied by men who cannot all have the originality that will enable them to win an audience to the unaffected speaking of their thoughts. Men who have nothing to say write copiously. Debarred from the old way of asserting their right to be heard by a forced show of learning, they fall back upon the other old way of a forced display of wit, or weave tales in which weak English conveys, through crude surprises and extravagance of incident, in throes of debility a sense of strength. What else is to be done by one who has no natural truth to express which is sufficiently raised above men's everyday thoughts to appear worth especial notice, when it is presented also in men's everyday language? Denied the artificial aid of pedantry, he strives to be thought either smart or startling, and hides poverty of mind under strained incidents or language tinselled with con-

ceits. It may be true, as Lyly said, that speech "neither adorned with fine figures, neither sprinkled with choice phrases, bringeth tediousness." But figures and quick-witted phrases are to mind in its activity only what flush of cheek and flash of eye are to the body. Even Puttenham, regarding them as rouge, observed that rouge is not an ornament for all parts of the face.

Defects like these incident to the demand created in our day for a large mass of wholesome ready-writing are, nevertheless, much too natural to be deplored as absolutely evil. By commonplace opinions, gaily phrased, or Defects that may be signs of rapid growth. as with glaring incidents that force themselves upon the dullest power of attention, many thousands are now being exercised, with pleasure to themselves, in the bare mechanism of reading. Of two journals for the million, one shall with deliberation be so written as to put some slight strain on the power of attention; and the other shall with equal deliberation obtain more readers by seeking to amuse and instruct in the way that asks least of the readers' intellect. It is hard to say which is more serviceable; one deepens, without widening—the other widens, without deepening, the reading power. To a certain extent those two functions of literature have always been and always will be separate, until the day shall come—as it will come in its due time some dozen generations hence—when the whole nation reads; and they who are not children read with all their minds.

Towards this end literature tends. Once Europe itself was hardly large enough to furnish a sufficient public to The upward way. the writer, who addressed in Latin, as the common language of the educated, none but readers with trained faculties of study. Now every region of thought is in each country well occupied; and although these regions vary much in population, yet it usually happens that an English writer, even upon the abstrusest topic, if he can say what is worth hearing, may be fairly content with his English audience. Every year, without University help, thousands of the mere readers take their degree as thinkers; and pass, in the course of sharpening and polishing, from the grindstone to the diamond-powder; or rise, as from appreciation of the gaudy pictures of the nursery, to a

sense of nature and true art that is but nature uttered through sound, form, or colour by the perfect voice of man.

These new thinkers attach themselves first and with most pleasure to the better literature of their own day. This they prefer in their hearts to the best utterances of the past, and will read more willingly than even the verse of Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, or Dryden. For the contemporary author is read by the bright light of all familiar knowledge of his time that gives the right colouring to every allusion, and brings all the stir of its true life into each thought. But the best writer of a preceding day is read more or less in the dark; by all of us he is read with more or less defective sense of facts once obvious, now obsolete, that gave vivacity to his allusions, and of the whole living spirit of the hour in which he spoke.

Nevertheless the well-being of our wit depends greatly upon our close familiarity with all that is best in English thought. And if we could so read over again the story of the English mind, as to recall some at least of the living influences which made our foremost writers what they were; if we could so think over it all that we might attach to any name or period at least enough of human interest to save an immortal utterance of living thought from being as a mere dead book to us—for we are not reading a book until we feel in it a man living and speaking—something would be gained. There would be something gained even by small success in such an effort; and, knowing that, I pass now with good courage to an effort to recall in these volumes some traces of the life of English Literature.

## BOOK I.

### Period of the Formation of the Language.

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#### CHAPTER I.

QUESTIONS and theories of race, and of the probable character of prehistoric England, enter into every discussion of the origin of English. Since it is in the nature of the Prehistoric England. subject that no fact asserted in relation to it can be absolutely proved, there is to no question an indisputable answer, and of no theory can an impartial student become the unhesitating advocate. But each philological opinion is maintained by partisans of its own—men of great ability, who, by their conflicts, do all that in human reason can be done to bring us nearer to the truth. Dispassionate men are no doubt useful as critics and arrangers of existing knowledge; but, with the whole force of their minds pressing at a single point, they are the enthusiasts who break fresh ground. Intent each on his own clearing, these pioneers enlarge the borders within which their neighbours plough and sow, and build and legislate.

We are altogether in an intellectual Far West when we discuss the ancestry of those early possessors of this country, who are still part of it as the Cymry and the Gael, or when we endeavour to define early relations of the different races of the world to one another. But let us observe what has been said and done, with a well-grounded respect for the ingenious advocate of every opinion. In conflict alone is wholesome truth to be worked out among us; and there is no spirit poorer than that which, because it sees two points of view to be curiously opposite, flatters itself with a sneer at either or at both. In good accord, therefore, with philologists of all shades of opinion, we may inquire among them whence the ancient Britons came.

Says one, Out of Cimmerian darkness; says another, Out of Hyperborean light.

That the Welsh Cymry are descended from the old Cimmerians, while Scyth and Scot, Gaul and Gael, are related names, is an opinion widely held. What may perhaps be at present regarded as the standard theory on this subject is to be found in the first Essay appended to the Fourth Book<sup>1</sup> of the annotated translation of Herodotus by Mr. George Rawlinson, to which Sir Henry Rawlinson and Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson contributed their notes. Between the years B.C. 800-600 the Cimmerii, Gimiri, or Gomerim were powerful, says this authority, in Western Asia and Eastern Europe. Herodotus is confirmed as to that fact by Homer, Æschylus, Callinus, Aristotle, and by remaining names of places. The Cimmerians of Homer<sup>2</sup> dwelt "at the farthest limit of the ocean stream, immersed in darkness and beyond the ken of the light-giving sun"—a vague geographical expression, which may or may not have meant some part of the northern coast of the Black Sea. There certainly Æschylus<sup>3</sup> has placed Cimmeria, as neighbour to the Sea of Azov and the Bosphorus. In the seventh and eighth centuries B.C. there were Greek colonists upon the northern coast of the Black Sea from whom trustworthy information might be had. The poet Callinus<sup>4</sup> speaks of a Cimmerian invasion, that there is reason to believe one of a series of raids, in which this people, crossing the Danube and the Bosphorus, joined sometimes on their way by Thracian tribes, descended upon Asia Minor. The universal opinion of the Greeks was, that the Cimmerians came from north of the Danube, their home lying between that river and the Don, which flows into the Sea of Azov. Making settlements in Asia Minor, they were masters of Sinope for a time, and of Antandros for a century. But, of their own country, modern Sebastopol was the central point; for it was the Crimea and the coast on either side, eastward until beyond Taganrög, and to the west beyond Odessa.

Again, Ezekiel,<sup>5</sup> B.C. 600, speaks of Gomer as a nation, coupling it with Togarmah. He places it in the North Quarter (Ar-

<sup>1</sup> Rawlinson's 'Herodotus' (London, 1859), vol. iii. pp. 183-191.

<sup>2</sup> 'Odyssey,' xi. 13-22.

<sup>3</sup> 'Prometheus Bound,' 748-750.

<sup>4</sup> Fragment of Callinus, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ezekiel xxxviii. 6.

menia); and the Armenians call Gamir the ancestor of their Haichian race of kings. In the Babylonian and Assyrian inscriptions the Sacan or Scythic population, spread over the Persian empire, are called Gimiri, as if the Gimiri of one division of languages were an equivalent word to the Saka or Scyth of another. Perhaps both meant "wanderers." Festus and Plutarch say that the name of the Cimbri meant robbers; but, in uncivilized times, "rover" and "robber" are connected terms. Identity of name and race are indeed not universal—the Persian Germanii are not Germans, the Iberi of Georgia are not related to those of Spain; but the *e* is at any rate a presumption raised by the close resemblance of name between the Greek *Kimmeri-oi* and the Celtic *Cymry*.

I am still giving only a digest of the able argument for this theory in Mr. Rawlinson's Herodotus. When the Scythians, crossing the Don, fell on the Cimmerians from the East, the Cimmerians must, it is argued, have gone west. That has been always the course taken by Asiatic hordes pressing on Europe. But if these powerful tribes went west B.C. 650-600, whither did they go? Herodotus knew only, in Central and Western Europe, of the Sigynnes, the Cynetians, and the Celts. The Sigynnes and Cynetians soon disappear, and "could scarcely be the great nation of the Cimmerii, which, until driven from the Ukraine by the force of the Scythian torrent, was wont to extend its ravages over large tracts of Asia Minor." We can only find them among the Celts, who had an unvarying tradition that they came from the East, and of whom one division bears the special name of Cymry.

Celts, according to this authority, were the primitive inhabitants of Gaul, Belgium, and Britain, possibly also of Spain and Portugal. In Spain, Belgium, and North Gaul the Celts were Cimbri. In Britain Cimbric Celts occupied the south coast at the time of Cæsar's landing. Even if, as I believe, the Belgæ in South Britain were of Germanic race, it was in Britain as in Gaul the Celts whom they displaced. Pressed upon by the Gothic or Teutonic race, they have formed the basis of the population in several large European countries. The name of the Cimmerii and Cimbri is now shared by the Cymry of Cambria with the Crim Tartars of the Crimea, which is a portion of their ancient home.



It is probable, this theory goes on to suggest, that the Cimmerians found, when driven westward, waste land uninhabited or thinly peopled by a Tartar or Mongolian race, which was absorbed, causing a Tartar admixture with the Celtic blood, or, when not absorbed, was driven to the north, where it is now represented by Finns, Esths, and Lapps. Such may have been the Spanish Iberians, forefathers of the peculiar people of the Basque. The Cymry were first spread over central Europe by the force of Scythians from behind. It is most likely to have been the impulse of the Goths and other Teutons by which they were driven on to Gaul, and Spain, and Britain. The pressure of Iberians caused further migration of Celts across the Pyrenees to their own kinsmen in Gaul. Thence want of space forced many across the Alps to found new settlements in Italy and Hungary. Next followed a period of rest and pause in the movement; but a century later, about the year B.C. 280, hordes of Gauls from these regions entered Macedonia, and threatened Greece. Repulsed from Delphi, they went northward, invaded Asia Minor, and, when other ground was reconquered from them, still dwelt in the heart of Phrygia, giving the name Galatia to its northern part. At this time also they retaliated on the Scythians, intermixed with them, forming Celto-Scythians, and advanced as far as their old home in the Crimea, whence they were again driven by the progress of Sarmatic tribes, which then commenced. Forced along the valley of the Danube, there they left their traces in the names Wallachia and Galicia, but themselves finally sank under the antagonism of more powerful nations. From Eastern and Central Europe Celts have disappeared. In Northern Italy, in France, where their language is yet to be heard in Brittany, and among ourselves in Cornwall, Wales, the Scotch Highlands, and Ireland, their traces are distinct. In many parts of Wales, North Scotland, and Ireland the population is almost purely and entirely Celtic.

The keen advocate of a less popular theory was the late Rev. John Williams, Archdeacon of Cardigan, whose argument<sup>1</sup> is curious and interesting. He sets out with a passage quoted by Diodorus Siculus from Hecataeus the Milesian,

Were the  
Celts Hyper-  
boreans?

of whose works fragments alone remain. Hecataeus took part in the revolt of the Ionians from Darius about the year 500 B.C. An inquisitive traveller, he knew what was known among the Ionians, of whose number the Phocæans had established a commerce with Tartessus and Southern Spain. Arganthonius, a long-lived king of Tartessus, was an especial friend of the Phocæans. What, therefore, was known in Spain might become known to Hecataeus. With this preface Archdeacon Williams requotes from Hecataeus this remarkable passage, as given by Diodorus the Sicilian :

“Now, after describing the parts of Asia lying northward, we think it not inappropriate to narrate the mythological stories concerning the Hyperboreans. Hecataeus, and some other authors of ancient mythology, say that in the regions over against ‘Celtica,’ there is in the ocean an island, not smaller than Sicily ; that this island is situated below the constellation of the Bears, and that it is inhabited by men called Hyperboreans, because they are placed beyond the blast of Boreas. They add, that the land, being fertile and producing everything necessary, and enjoying a fine temperature, bears two crops in the year. Now, they mythologically state that Latona was born there, and that, on that account, Apollo is honoured by them above all other gods ; that among them there are some men priests, as it were of Apollo, and that, consequently, he is daily and continuously hymned by them with lyric songs, and exceedingly honoured ; that there is also in the island both a consecrated precinct of great magnificence, and a temple of corresponding beauty, adorned with numerous dedicated gifts, and in shape spherical ; that there is also a city sacred to the god, and that the majority of its inhabitants are harpers, and that these, continuously harping in the temple, sing, lyrically, hymns to the god, and greatly magnify his deeds. They also state that the Hyperboreans have a peculiar dialect, and are very kindly disposed to the Hellenes, and especially to the Athenians and Delians, and that they have inherited this friendly feeling from ancient times. They also say that some of the Hellenes have passed over to the Hyperboreans, and have left there precious dedicated gifts, bearing Hellenic inscriptions ; that in the same manner Abaris, in a former age, had passed into Hellas, and renewed with the Delians the bond of friendship and consanguinity. They also say that the moon from this island appears to be not far distant from the earth, and clearly shows certain earthly eminences. It is also said that every nineteenth year the god descends into this island. Now, every nineteenth year certain returns of the stars to fixed positions take place, and on this account a period of nineteen years is called by the Hellenes the great year ; that when the god makes his periodical appearance, he both plays the harp and dances during the night, from the vernal equinox to the rising of the Pleiades, taking great delight in his own successful efforts.”

“If that information,” says the Archdeacon, “was derived from Phocæans who frequented the court of Arganthonius, it is evident that these Hyperboreans were the occupants of Great

Britain, which is so accurately described in the above passage, that one of the earliest editors of Diodorus could not refrain, in his index, from writing—"See whether this cannot be applied to Anglia." Diodorus himself did not consider that this passage referred to Britain; yet, when he comes to describe our island, his account coincides, it is observed, curiously in several particulars with the description of the island occupied by the Hyperboreans:

"Here are a few points in which the historian Diodorus agrees with the ancient Mythologist (book v.):—

"For over against the Paroecanic Galatia there are in the ocean many islands, of which one, being also the greatest, is called 'Brettanica.'

"Compare the island of Mythology, 'an island off the coast of Celtica, in the ocean.'

"Again, 'the island being triangular, something like Sicily, has not its sides equally long.'

"Compare this with the expression, 'not less than Sicily.'

"Again, the Hyperborean island was 'under the Bears.'

"Compare Britannia's position, 'as it is situated under the Bear.'

"Again, the Hyperboreans, from the Homeric times downward, were described as undisturbed by wars; none of their neighbours ever molested them with the sword.

"Compare with this the following passage from the history:—"The island in ancient times was never troubled by a foreign military power. For we have not heard that Dionysus nor Heracles, nor any other hero or prince, made war against it."

"Again, the Hyperboreans are described as innocent, prosperous, peaceful.

"Compare this description with the following account of the inhabitants of Brettanica:—"It is said that aboriginal races inhabit Brettanica, who preserve in their habits the primitive mode of life. For among other things they use chariots for their wars, as it is handed down to us, the ancient heroes of the Hellenes did in the Trojan war.' 'That in their habits they are simple, and far removed from the craftiness and wickedness of the present age. . . . 'That the island is very populous. . . . That they have many kings and princes, and that these for the most part are peacefully disposed towards each other.' 'That those who inhabit the western promontory of the island called Belerium, are hospitable even in an exceeding degree, and, on account of their intercourse with foreign merchants, completely civilized in their habits.'"

The Archdeacon quotes also, as a contemporary of Hecataeus, Pindar,<sup>1</sup> who speaks of the "community of the Hyperboreans, a people who are ministers of Apollo," from which the son of Amphietyon went to the shady fountains of the Ister. Again he says of the Hyperboreans,<sup>2</sup> that Perseus once feasted among

<sup>1</sup> Olymp. Ode iii. v. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Pythian Ode x. v. 49.

them, and found them sacrificing hecatombs of asses, in which sacrifices, and in their vocal songs, "Apollo takes incessant and most intense delight, and laughs while he views the petulance of the restive brutes. The Muse, moreover, is not a stranger to their haunts: but everywhere tuneful choirs of virgins, and the voice of harps, and the tones of pipes, are set in motion; and the assembly, crowned with wreaths of the golden laurel, banquet merrily. Nor do disease nor decaying old age affect the sacred race: and they live free from toils and wars." Æschylus, who fought at Salamis in the year when Pindar died, makes the Coryphæus, in a chorus of the Choephoreæ, allude, as if proboreans." So "the gold and great prosperity of the Hyperboreans." So far, it is argued, that "the authorities lead us to laurels, and Hyperboreans in a country abounding with olives, off the coasts; and for the island of Hecataeus in the ocean whom the poet calls 'Celtica.'" But then comes Herodotus, of "a firm conviction, that were he on any disputed fact to procure the opinion of one eye-witness, it was sufficient to outweigh all that poets might imagine or mythologists enigmatically suggest;" and Herodotus did not believe in the existence of Hyperboreans. His inquiries, it is argued, proved only that there was no such people in the more northern parts of Asia or Europe; but of Western Europe he confessed that he knew little. "Now concerning the western extremities of Europe I have no accurate account to give;" and his own statement<sup>1</sup> of a Delian report should have led him to look for the Hyperboreans westward.

"But the Delians say much more about the Hyperboreans, as they say that sacred gifts, bound up in wheaten straw, are regularly conveyed to the Scythians, and that the neighbours of these, receiving them in succession, convey them to the Adriatic, the furthest station from the West; that thence, being conveyed southward, they are escorted until the Dodonæans, first of Hellenes, receive them; that from them they descend to the Malæan Gulf, and cross over into Eubœa; and then that city sends them to another city until they reach Carystus. But the Carystians, passing by Andros, convey them to Tenos, and the Tenians to Delos. That in earlier times the Hyperboreans sent two virgins to bear the sacred offerings. These the Delians name Hyperochè and Laodice; and that as an escort they sent with them five of their citizens, whom

they now call Perpherees, who have great honours at Delos ; but that, when the men thus sent forth never returned back, the Hyperboreans, regarding it as a great evil that it should always be their lot never to receive back the men<sup>deputed</sup>, conveyed on this account the sacred gifts, bound in wheaten straw<sup>aw</sup>, to their next neighbours, with injunctions to escort them from their<sup>own</sup> town to another nation, and they say that the offerings, thus escorted, reached Delos."

The later Greek authors, except Callimachus, agreed<sup>Zealous</sup> with Herodotus in denying the existence of a nation of Hyperboreans, or placed them in a Utopia within the arctic circle. Williams, who would connect a hierarchy of Druids with the worship of Apollo, and of course sees only Stonehenge in the<sup>consecrated</sup> precinct of great magnificence, and a temple of corresponding beauty, in shape spherical," quotes further from Herodotus the Delian tradition, that Arge and Opis came to Delos from the Hyperboreans before Hyperochè and Laodicè, that they came with the deities themselves, and that their names<sup>ward</sup> were invoked by nations in an ancient hymn composed for them<sup>ward</sup>, by Lycian, who lived long before Orpheus. Greek temples<sup>ions</sup> are next quoted from Pausanias (A.D. 170). Priests of the island<sup>ne have</sup> of Peloponnesian Jupiter, in Elis, said that the wild olive was brought by Heracles from the Hyperborean land. According to a tradition of the priests of Delphi, the oracle of Apollo in Delphi was established by Hyperboreans, and by Olen, who was the first prophet of Phœbus. Having argued thus for an ancient connexion of the Hyperboreans with the religious creed of Greece before Hesiod and Homer had invented the theogony of the Hellenes, the Archdeacon quotes from a fragment of Stephanus of Byzantium a passage stating that Pelmissus, who went to Caria, "where the temple of the Pelmissian Apollo now exists," was from the Hyperboreans. Now Pelmissus is at this day famous for Cyclopean ruins.

Through such reasoning the conclusion is reached, that the people called Hyperboreans inhabited the south-west of Spain, Gaul west of the Alps, and the island of Great Britain ; that they were prosperous and civilized ; that there was commerce and sympathy between priests of Stonehenge and those of Delphi ; that prehistoric Britons were, in fact, Titan Celts, closely allied to the Pelasgians of ancient Greece ; and that these people migrated

by water rather than by land from Central Asia at a period not very much less remote than the days of Noah.

Not parting from the Celts, who first possessed the British soil, we look also to the Anglo-Saxons, who by conquest and colonisation took possession of the arable land of the <sup>Anglo-Saxons.</sup> plains, and left to the ancient Britons little more than pasturage among the mountains of the Scottish Highlands, Wales, Cornwall, and the hills of Cumberland. Whence came this English people? As we are now to trace the formation of their language in their literature, it is fit that we know something of what is argued upon its origin and its relationship to other tongues.

With a question of the origin of language itself such discussion usually begins. The details are entirely theo- <sup>The origin of language.</sup> retical. Psammetichus, King of Egypt, the same curious experimentalist who sent a long rope down the sources of the Nile, did, perhaps, according to the well-known story in Herodotus,<sup>1</sup> attempt a practical experiment by shutting up two newborn infants with a herdsman, who was ordered to "let no one utter a word in their presence, but to keep them in a sequestered cottage, and from time to time introduce goats to their apartment, see that they got their fill of milk, and in all other respects look after them." The innate natural language was expected to rise to their tongues after the indistinct babblings of infancy were over. At the end of two years, when the herdsman one day went in to them, the children both ran up to him with outstretched arms, and distinctly said *Bek*. Observing afterwards that the word *Bek* was constantly in their mouths, he reported it, and the children repeated it when they were produced before the King. Now *Bek* was Phrygian for bread, and so it was determined that the original tongue of tongues was Phrygian. Professor Max Müller observes that *bek*, as the name of bread, is equivalent to the *bak* in baker, and involves ideas of a mill and an oven, which nobody would expect to find innate. If the story be true, the children, who had heard goats cry, bleated. A like experiment is fabled to have been made by James IV. of Scotland, who shut up the infants with

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<sup>1</sup> Herod., 'Euterpe,' cap. ii.

dumb man, and found that they spoke Hebrew. Nobody will believe that story, since we all know well that infants learn to speak, as it is reasonable to think that the human race itself learnt in its infancy to speak, by exercise of intellect in imitation. As to this matter, Socrates, or Plato in his name, supposed the truth to lie in the same theory which reappears with all the gloss of a new principle admirably enforced in Mr. Wedgwood's Dictionary of Etymology.<sup>1</sup> Plato himself had it from the Pythagoreans, and his exposition of it,<sup>2</sup> certainly serious, has by some been taken for a jest against Protagoras. Farther back than the Pythagoreans we can hardly go, to illustrate by etymology the saying of the preacher, "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been."

There used, indeed, to be a belief in a certain "artificer of names, who is among men the rarest of artificers," whose vocation it had been in past times cunningly to fashion names as instruments, and who gave to each thing the name fit for it by nature. It was considered clear that, when the Gods gave names, they gave them to things in complete accordance with their nature. To the River of Troy—

"Xanthus by Gods, by men Scamander, call'd,"

the name of Xanthus must for some reason have been peculiarly apt (although Goropius Becanus did derive it from the Flemish for sea-margin). In discussing etymologies of this kind, Plato follows the usual ways of derivation. Poseidon, for example, by the man whose walk was stopped at the sea-shore, may have been called a foot-chainer, *πρὸς δεσμὸς ὄν*. But in prosecuting such inquiries, When, Socrates asks, will he who fails to answer justly fail? Will it not be when he reaches those names which are as elements of other names and of all talk? Whenever we lay hold of that which is no longer composed from other names, we may say justly that we have reached an element. But propriety is as essential in the element as in the compound. So reasoned Plato, and he reasoned well. were he goes on to argue, we had no voice or tongue, we should sympress ourselves by imitative signs and gestures; having voice, that

the P 'A Dictionary of English Etymology.' By Hensleigh Wedgwood, M.A.  
v. I. & II. (A.—P.) London, 1861-63.      <sup>2</sup> In 'Cratylus.'

we imitate with that: "a name then," he says, "would seem to be an imitation, by the voice, of the thing named."

Only he would not dignify every mocker of beasts with the rank of a namegiver. The true namegiver, he says, even as a musician imitates passion with sound or a painter represents everything by colour, imitates the existence of a thing by letters and syllables. It must be so, he adds. We have nothing that will better account for the first names, unless like the tragedy writers we seek help from our machinery and introduce the Gods, or evade assertion of first principles by resting content at a reference to some people more ancient than ourselves. The old philosopher—and it is here that he was supposed to be joking—found in the letter *r* a similitude of motion, stirring forward; in *i* of attenuation, thinness; *a* and *e* of greatness, of roundness; *ph* (*f*), *ps*, *s*, and *z* seemed to suggest inflation, size; *l* represented smoothness, oily liquidity; *g* something of the tenacity of glue. Mr. Wedgwood himself hardly applies his wit with more ingenuity in speculation, and his learning in producing evidence to support speculation, of exactly the same kind.

The imitative origin was indeed implied in the doctrine prevalent after Plato's time,—that words were formed by mimicry, by metaphor, by catachresis or the use of the nearest word to one that is wanting, by antithesis and by euphemism or making the best of a bad subject,—since all the methods here named after mimicry express only the new turns given to words already formed; and the first creation of the word is to be explained only by the way of imitation. But the etymologists who appear to have reasoned thus on their own terms. And again in Aristotle's time students were further misled by superficial reading of the phrase joined by the Peripatetics to all their definitions of language, that the words were significant "by compact." The provision of this clause was just, but it admitted easily of being connected with a vague belief in arbitrary symbolism as the source of language.

Moreover the great number of grammarians, even in Quintilian's day, amused themselves and confused others with etymologies of the most ridiculously superficial kind.<sup>1</sup> General

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<sup>1</sup> Quintilian. 'Instit.,' B. I. cap. vi. 34-38.



terminations, common to a hundred words, were treated at will as peculiar words when anything like sense could be got out of them. Testamentum was 'testatio mentis;' who could be dissatisfied with a fact so apparent? It was as if we in England were to derive the word from 'testator meant,' and so be satisfied.

What was absurdly bad among the later Romans became worse in the hands of the dialecticians of the middle ages, and the centuries next following. The very minuteness of inquiry that prevailed was of a kind incompatible with any philosophical generalisation. One man produced six volumes on a dot. The letters S and B each became the subject of a dissertation. The Sorbonne, having decreed how the Latin Q should be pronounced, was enthusiastic enough on behalf of these researches into language to cut off one of its members who adhered to kiskis and kamkam. "Here," said somebody of the Sorbonne to Cásaubon, "is a building in which men have disputed for four hundred years." "And what," replied Cásaubon, "have they settled?" When the Logicians asked one another "Whether the Chimæra humming through the void of nature could devour second intentions," in what spirit could we expect the philosophy of language to be studied?

In France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries there was no true study of etymology. In England, however, there was an impulse given to the analysis of language by the 'Hermes' of James Harris, issued from the close of Salisbury in the middle of the last century. Harris took up a degraded subject with the classic parable of Heraclitus, whose fame, celebrated throughout Greece, induced certain persons to make a long journey to see so great a man, and, when they came, they chanced to find him warming himself in his kitchen. The meanness of the place caused them to stop, but the wise man cried to them, "Enter boldly, for here too there are Gods."

Many an English scholar was enticed by Harris's 'Hermes' into the kitchen of language, and led to inquire how words are prepared for the world's parlour. The chief merit, indeed, of that book was its inviting character. Whatever its defects of doctrine, it taught thoughtful men to entertain themselves with

the analysis of language. As to the origin of the primary words, Harris's view offers, indeed, a curious contrast to the theory of imitation. He looked upon single words not as representative of things, but "symbols of ideas;" and he went to the extreme point in that direction by adding that they were symbols "primarily, essentially, and immediately" of general ideas, and of particular ideas "only secondarily, accidentally, and mediately." Although much has been done for philology in this country since Harris's time, the chief attention of scholars has been given to a minute development of the history of our language; to the establishment of any first principle not much thought has been given. The thought in that direction is to be found chiefly in the fanciful and fashionable relationships established among tongues and peoples, founded upon facts as edg<sup>ent</sup> as that Erin, or as it used to be written, Ierne, and Iran are almost identical names, and that buildings like the round towers of Ireland are to be found only in Persia. With these perhaps we may class theories of brotherhoods, only less obviously unphilosophical as to the grounds on which they rest, than the conclusion of John Becan of Gorp, who, living at the close of the sixteenth century, preceded Sir William Jones in the discovery of resemblances between Indian and Germanic words, and inferred therefore that Adam and Eve in Paradise talked Flemish.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Monboddo's speculations on the interjectional origin of language were for a time popular. Before there was language, he said, there were wild men whose utterance could be only by cries. Travellers, he thought, had proved that there was no mimicry among barbarians. Speech was formed out of inarticulate cries of the wild animal; man's cries are from the throat, and therefore the first language was guttural. Thus La Hontan had said of the Hurons that they never shut their lips in speaking. Lord Monboddo explained, also, that because vowel cries are few, variety of expression was only to be had by adding to their length. Wherefore it was that M. la Condanigne, four<sup>th</sup> poetazzarorincouroac be a savage way of saying t!

Dr. Alexander Murray absurdly derived all the

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<sup>1</sup> Gorop. Becan. 'Hernathena,' lib. ix. p. 204, ed. <sup>an</sup>

Europe from the nine imitative syllables, Ag, Bag, Dwag, Cwag, Lag, Mag, Nag, Rag, Swag. The late Sir John Stoddart's treatise on Glossology, which is the second part of the work on Universal Grammar furnished by him to the 'Encyclopædia Metropolitana,' contains large recognition of the extent to which imitative words, or onomatopœias, are built into the foundations of language. "It is not," he says, "to be supposed that all or even the majority of words can be traced to the mere imitation of sound; but that onomatopœias must be numerous is evident from the great variety of sounds imitated." He justly takes to himself credit for "the first attempt to bring under a general classification this considerable branch of the elements of speech," in a chapter of the work just named, which contains, indeed, the greater number of the examples introduced by Mr. Wedgwood in the preface to his Dictionary.

I have quoted Sir John Stoddart's rejection of the supposition "that all or even the majority of words can be traced to the mere imitation of sound," a rejection which some readers, while they assent to it, may hold to be equivalent to a dismissal of the imitative principle as one not of universal application. But there is a sound formed by imitation—*mum*—to express silence itself, and it is obvious that we may imitate more things than sound by methods of articulation; as a painter imitates not tints only, but thoughts and passions by the use of colour, or a musician can suggest the sentiments of love, anger, despair, by vibrations of dead wood, or brass, or catgut. I am falling back on Plato for these illustrations. And again we may repeat with the old philosopher, "It must be so." We have no better account to give of the origin of names unless we betake ourselves to our machinery and introduce the Gods, or are content to stop short of first principles in our inquiry. The "root" with which English inquirers commonly are satisfied Mr. Wedgwood describes very happily as merely "the core of a group of related words having similar significations." Content with that we do not push investigation farther, and accept thus prepared for the alternatives suggested. On the other hand, there that book was in, while German philology was breaking into life, doctrine, it taught an etymologist battled for the propriety of solving a *Deus ex machinâ*. When France and England

were indifferent to the whole subject, there was war of words in Berlin upon the question of the Divine or Human origin of speech, as if there could be a "human" origin of anything belonging to man's nature. Tooke said well in the 'Diversions of Purley,' "God having furnished man with senses, and with organs of articulation, as He has also with water, lime, and sand, it would seem no more necessary to form the words for man, than to temper the mortar." The question really was, whether man multiplied words to express his wants as they grew, in accordance with a natural law, part of the simple harmony of the Divine Government; or whether language came to him from above by miracle. The former opinion prevailed; but the subsequent course of research and speculation, nowhere more carefully pursued than in Germany, has never looked back farther than to the assumption of some primitive language, out of which diversities of national history and character developed many forms.

Herder the poet prefixed his own general assent to Lord Monboddo's doctrines on the origin of language. Lord Monboddo as an etymologist followed the lead of his friend Harris. If he lectured men utterly savage who had all language to learn, he brought to them more cultivated men as teachers, and found the inventors of speech among the Egyptians, not where Herder looked and others are still looking for them, in Upper Asia. There are, however, among the German writers upon language, and especially in the writings of Wilhelm von Humboldt, many vague recognitions of the imitative principle.

When Wilhelm von Humboldt<sup>1</sup> speaks of the innate necessity of producing language by which man's spirit is urged to a natural issue of its thoughts in words, and argues that, man's nature being everywhere one, there is one issue to this effort, modified only by peculiar and national conditions—thus accounting for the harmonies among different tongues—he is within a hair's-breadth of accepting the whole imitative theory of speech. Speech, he says, arises in three ways: it is imitative, symbolic,

<sup>1</sup> 'Ueber die Verschiedenheit des Menschlichen Sprach' 1836. The best elementary book on 'The Origin of Lan'

Berlin, is that by

and analogical; the first phonetic, but the second and third intellectual. Yet nothing would seem to be more obvious than that,—to use Humboldt's terms,—the intellectual is based on the phonetic. His ideal of speech is that "articulation depends on the power of the mind over the organs of speech, compelling them to an utterance that corresponds in form with its own working." He would teach, therefore, that not only much more than mere sound, but even the general ideas, which Harris took to be the elements of language, might be expressed in articulate voice by a sort of onomatopœia. Mr. Wedgwood, rightly conceiving that our advance is from the particular to the general, provides no theory for the first creation of a common term; and no argument is necessary to show how immediately and easily particular words, common in their application, would become available for common use, or how often images of the seen would become symbols of the unseen.

The whole argument not more than partially established may rest only on a partial truth; nevertheless we are now far removed from the notion that articulate sounds are but so many dead

"—as flame is but lighted smoke, that—  
Right so is sound air ybroke."

The world about us is not simply mirrored, but is a true soul, by all the tongues that syllable man's informed with and his wants. The subtlest harmonies of life and of knowledge lie hidden in the very letters of the alphabet. Our nature may mystery let us be sure that it is no part of the wisdom of their East. We trace it ultimately to the plan of Him who made of the in so many of the habits of life "wiser than we know."

Until recently writers were content to misapply to scientific use the spiritual teaching of the book of Genesis. The nations of the world, traced back to Noah's Ark, were classed according to the names of Noah's three sons, Japheth, Shem, and Ham the father of Canaan, into Iapetic (first so called in comparatively recent time by Rask), Semitic (first so called by Eichhorn), and Hamite (or Chamitic) families. The descendants of Japheth were said to have peopled Europe, a great part of Asia, and perhaps America, by way of Behring's Straits.

Ethnology.  
Origin of the  
English.

To the Semitic languages belonged Hebrew, Phœnician, Syriac, and Arabic, which still retain that common name; but the Hamite were the languages of the African tribes. Confident in this theory, the white enslaver of the negro sometimes fits it comfortably for himself to the text, "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."

Our own place among the posterity of Japheth was once defined also by acceptance of a few convenient traditions. Gomer, we read, was the son of Japheth, Ashkenaz the son of Gomer, and Ashkenaz, as Verstegan has it,

"according to the opinion of sundry very learned and judicial authors, was the father of Tuisco, or Tuiskon, the father and conductor of the Germans, who, after his name, even unto this day, do in their own tongue call themselves Tuitsh, and their country of Germany, Tuitshland; and the Netherlands, using the D for the T, do make it Dnytsch and Duytschland. Some authors, as, namely, Sebastian Munster, do report that Tuisco was the son of Noah, by his wife Araza, or Arezia (of others called Tythea), born after the Flood; and that, coming with his people out of Asia into Europe, he extended his dominion from the river Tanais even unto the Rhine. Other German authors are of opinion that he lastly made his residence and abode on the side of the river Rhine, at a place which unto this day retaineth the name of Duytsch, situated right over against the city of Cullin" (Dentz, opposite Cologne). "But now, whether Tuisco were the son of Noah, or the son of Ashkenaz, who was grandchild unto Japheth, although some do move question, yet surely with more likelihood of truth we may follow the opinion of such as affirm him to have been the great-grandchild of Japheth, and the rather in regard of the mighty and populous offspring foretold in Holy Writ to proceed from Japheth, which is very agreeable unto the most populous German nation, accounting all members thereof." <sup>1</sup>

As to the nation being called by the foreigner German or Alman, Gar, says Verstegan, or Ger, has in German the same sense as Al; "both German and Alman then is as much as to say, All or wholly German." The Germans of different provinces bore different names, and some were Saxons, thus called, some said, from saxum, because of their hard and stony nature. Others said they were named from one of three princes, Saxo, Bruno, and Friso, who came from India with troops of men to serve Alexander the Great; these settling afterwards in Germany, many founded Saxony, Brunswick, and Friesland. Others said

<sup>1</sup> Verstegan's 'Antiquities,' ed. 1628, p. 9.

they were Sac-sons, sons of the Asiatic Sacæ. But Verstegan was sure that they were Germans who received their name from their use of a weapon peculiar to themselves, called the seax, shaped like a scythe, just as the Scythls are named for their good shooting from the verb scytan to shoot. What more was wanted? There were, indeed, people even in Verstegan's time who, not content to have the Saxons come as Germans into Britain, "will needs bring them from elsewhere to come into Germany;" but of such requirement the good antiquary said "This seemeth to proceed of a certain kind of delight that some people take in deriving and fetching things very far off, though most commonly upon very little ground or show of certainty."

Many are in our day, nevertheless, confident of success in having by comparison of languages, and the discovery of a certain number of like sounds expressive of like thoughts, brought our ancestors the Germans as well as the Celts out of Asia, and made a neat family tree of what Erasmus Rask grouped as the Iapetic, but we are now taught to call the Indo-European languages. John Becan, even in the sixteenth century, had pointed out many resemblances between German and Indian words, but the track of research upon which students of language have been active during the present century dates only from eighty years ago. In 1784 Sir William Jones delivered his inaugural discourse as first President of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, and pointed out that there was in Sanskrit, the sacred language of India, "an immense mine" of information. It is the mine in which nearly every subsequent philologist has speculated heavily. Whether the "Indo-European" theory, in which all profits, or apparent profits, of the speculation are invested, be truth or temporary aid upon the way to truth, there can be no doubt that it has been, and is still, very serviceable to a right study of the formation of English.

Sanskrit or Aryan has not been a spoken language in India within historical times. It was a dead language more than two thousand years ago, and there is not even a record to show how it became extinct. It is the language of the four collections the Vêdas or sacred books of the Brahmins, which seem to be a reflection of a primitive state of society in the valley of the

Indus, and of which, according to Mr. Colebrooke, "the general style is flat, diffuse, and no less deficient in ornament than abundant in repetitions." Sanskrit is also the language of some long heroic poems. The Ramayana, next in antiquity to the Vêdas, is a sort of epic on the conquest of Ceylon by Rama, the chief of the four sons given at once to the King Dasaratha, who lived in the ancient Oude, and who had offered in his old age a horse sacrifice for children. Rama vanquished demons with celestial weapons. Rama earned Sita his wife, by not only bending but snapping her father's strong and long bow, which it took an eight-wheeled carriage to support, and which had to be drawn by a team of eight hundred men. Rama, sentenced to fourteen years' exile by his misguided father, retired with Sita to the forests of the Deccan, where, after many adventures, he was in conflict with Ravana, King of Ceylon, the demon monarch of the earth, "at whose name heaven's armies flee." Ravana, by sorcery and stratagem seizing on Rama's wife, carried her off; through the sky, to Ceylon. Rama then strengthened himself by alliance with Sugriva, King of the Monkeys, and the Monkey Monarch's monkey-general Hanuman marched with Rama at the head of monkey soldiers to Cape Comorin. And then they bridged the straits, overcame the demons, slew Ravana, recovered Sita, and sent her through the ordeal of a blazing fire to ascertain whether she had preserved her purity. Rama, because his fourteen years of exile were expired, returned home, where his throne was placed at his disposal, but, knowing himself to be a divine incarnation of Vishnu, instead of sitting on it he returned to heaven. Although the incidents are wild, even translation shows that there is much natural poetry in their expression, and as much may be said of the other Sanskrit epic. This is the 'Mahabharata,' by interpretation the Great Battle, poetical narration of a war between the Pandus and Kurus for the right to rule in Hastinapura; Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu, fighting on the side of the Pandus, is the hero of the poem. The epic of the Great Battle contains a hundred thousand verses, but there are incorporated in it episodes, written at different times by different authors, that are in fact separate poems,—the 'Bhagavat Gita,' for example, which is but an exposition of theology. Other notable works have been written in



Sanskrit since the Sanskrit ceased to be a living language. Such are the 'Hitopadesa,' a book of fables, which includes nearly all that are in the ancient collection of Bidpai, and half a dozen dramas,—three by Kalidasa, 'Sakontala' the most famous of them; three by Bhababhuti, who lived in the eighth century.

To Sir William Jones, Sanskrit appeared as a mine yielding only the purest virgin gold. The Sanskrit language, he said, was "more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either." But later philologists, who hold that complexity and redundance are but signs of imperfection, think Sanskrit the more barbarous for having eight case-endings to a noun (one called the locative), six moods, and numerous inflexions representing secondary ideas, besides so many synonyms and so great a redundance of words, after the manner of the Society Islanders,—who have one word for a dog's tail, another for a bird's tail, another for a sheep's tail, yet not a word for the simple idea of a tail,—that, while in modern German there are said to be but 250 roots to the 80,000 words, in Sanskrit there are 2000.

The mine, once struck upon, was worked with energy. In 1784 the Asiatic Society was opened. In 1785 Dr. Charles Wilkins translated the 'Bhagavat Gita,' to which he added in 1787 the 'Hitopadesa,' and this was followed two years later by Sir William Jones's translation of the 'Sakontala.' Sir William himself did not regard Sanskrit as the parent language of a widely-dispersed family. Believing that Iran or Persia was the country from which all nations first migrated, he supposed "that the language of the first Persian empire was the mother of the Sanskrit, and consequently of the Zend and Parsee, as well as of Greek, Latin, and Gothic."<sup>1</sup> I quote some of the illustrations formerly cited of verbal conformity between English and Persian:<sup>2</sup>

"Abad, city or habitation,—Abode. Albet, Albeit. Ascarlati, scarlet. Bad, Bad. Bilter, Better. Berber, Barber. Burader, Brother. Bishinj, Business. Bricock, Apricot. Bus, a buss or kiss. Buté, Butt for shooting.

<sup>1</sup> 'Asiatic Researches,' vol. ii., pp. 64, 65.

<sup>2</sup> Weston's 'Specimen of the Conformity of the European Languages, particularly the English, with the Oriental Languages, especially the Persian.' 2nd edition. London, 1803.

Khurd, meat, Curd, coagulated milk, the first meat of man in a state of nature. Chartar (chia tar, four strings), Guitar. Cheré, face, Cheer, for countenance. Khui, Cue, meaning humour. It is Persian to say that a man in bad cue is in 'bad khui.' Dagh, a poniard wound, Dagger. Dehl, a hole in the ground, Dell. Dokhter, Daughter. Fuz, contour of the mouth, Phiz. Furn, an oven, Furnace. Kiras, Cherry. Karavan, a body of travellers, Caravan. Cafer, unbeliever, Caffre. Cak, bread in a twist, Cake. Kaw, Cow. Guerdoun, fortune, good or bad, Guerdon. Hernézan (hemé all, zen woman), Amazon. Huner, virtue, knowledge, Honour. Jasinin, Jasmine. Kub, Cup. Kurkum, Crocus. Kont, gouty, infirm of feet, Gout. Kupe, Cupping-glass. Limun, Lemon. Madé, Maid. Mush, Mouse. Mushk, Musk. Musyky, Music. Musif, making melancholy, Musing. Naf, navel, centre of a shield, Nave. Nam, name. Nu, new. Nak, point, tip, corner, Nook. Peik, attendant, Page. Pushiek, Pussy. Peer, Peer. Regu, Rag. Rub, Rub. Khakirub is a broom, from Khak, earth, and rub. Saker, Saucer. Sul, Sole (of foot). Shaul, shawl. Shah nat, the king is dead, Check-mate. Shuger, sugar. Shud, Should. Rustai, villagers, from rusta a village, Rustics. Yuakit, Hyacinth. Zaferan, Saffron."

Tuz is Persian for the bark of a tree cut into fringe for the ornament of bows. The word was once applied in England to a lock or tuft of hair, as Dryden writes :

"With odorous oil the head and hair are sleek,  
And then thou kemp'st the Tuzzes on thy cheek ;  
Of these thy barbers take a costly cure."

Several of the words in this list might be traced, if one preferred, to Arabic ; thus sugar is Shuger in Persian, Shuker in Arabic. Arabic is accounted a Semitic language, having no relationship to English. All conformities, therefore, that are admitted are explained by accidents of political intercourse. It will modify our estimate of Sanskrit analogues to cite even from Arabic a few of the conformities observed. They are such as these :

"Ain, Eyne. Aras, courts, open places, Arcas. Al Kobab, the vault or cupola, Alcove. Artzchenk, Artichoke. Asterlab, Astrolabe (*ἄστρον λαβείν*). Askyet, watery clouds, Skies. Aresh, from a verb meaning to connect (as arm with hand) Wrist. Amud, Humid. Anik, Neck. Afreit, giant, demon, spectre, Fright. Atimet, Meat (by the contraction that makes 'cockney' of *οἰκογένης*, town-born). Ankar, Anchor. Babus, Baby. Berbaris, Barberry. Belesan, Balsam. Burge, castle, fortress, Burg. Bukef, a violent thunder-shower, raining Buckets. Cotton, Cotton. General, General. Jabir or Geber, a setter of broken bones or reducer of fractions to wholes, Algebra. Jins, Genus. Jumlet, the whole together, Jumble. Ghell, hatred, envy, malice, Gall, Guile. Ghulf, a greedy sylvan god, who appears under deceiving forms to Gull men and animals, and send them down his Gullet. Isfunj, Sponge.

Huzar, strenuous, warlike, Hussar. Inkas, Inks. Jawr, a shock, Jar. Jehd, fatigue, over strain from labour applied to a horse, Jade, and adjective jaded. Kedd, a kid's skin. Krus, Crust of bread. Kal, Call. Ket, serving well as a domestic, which is the character of a Cat. Kyfa, Coif. Kandi, made of sugar, Candy. Candil, Candle. Kanun, a rule, ordinance, Canon. Katif, abhorring, Caitiff. Kabus, the nightmare, Incubus. Kermez, red, Crimson. Kalah, a head-covering, Caul, cap or Cowl worn by the Dervishes. Leslas, listless. Lubi, a foolish ridiculous fellow, Lubin, Looby. Maun, household utensils, baskets, pots, kettles, &c., Maund, a hand-basket, so Maundy Thursday, when the poor come with their baskets to take gifts away. Mahin, a domestic servant, Menial. Mutir, repeating often, Mutter. Meany, idea, signification, Meaning. Makhazen, a shop with drawers and shelves, Magazine. Mejusians, fire-worshippers, Magicians. Ness, elevating, raising, Ness, a Promontory. Pilwer, Pedler. Ruba, Robbing, from rubiden, to rob. Runa, a musical sound, Rune, Runic. Silk, Silk. Sumak, Sumach. Sherab, Syrup. Shurb, the drink, Shrub. Shurbet, Sherbet. Zurfet, too much of anything, Surfeit (not from the old French word *Surfait*, which meant crime, as *Forfait*). Syfr, Cipher. Salata, Salad. Turb, earth, clod, Turf. Turtur, Turtle-dove. Tetellus, writing, description, Title. Tariz, alighting and Tarrying on a journey. Tarif, Tariff. Tamboureh, Tambour. Tebe, a carpet with pile only on one side, Tapes, Tapestry. Tirad, a tedious speaker, Tiring. Tyriak, Treacle. Tylse, Talisman. Tul, Tall. Takhtekhet, equally joined, Tacked Together. Wedd, love, friendship, the most intimate union or regard, Wed. Weilih, cunning, shrewd, Wily. Weil, Wail. Wein, Wine. Yket, Thicket. Hehub, a violent wind that makes the dust fly, from hebou, flying dust, Hubbub. Isfinaj, Spinage. Igla, making dear, standing out for price, Higgle. Jema-ati-Wited, an assembly of the chiefs of the nation, Witenagemot."

The last word is a curious example of the happy delusion into which they may be confidently drawn who trust too much in similarity of sound. Some other coincidences in these lists are as comically accidental as others are obviously real and explicable; others probably real, although inexplicable. Some of them are words which the East has borrowed from the West. Thus we have clearly enough a barbarous union of Greek and Latin in the Persian word *Chirédest* for dexterous. When ingenious men set their wits to work upon two parallel lists of the words of any two languages, it would be more curious that they should not than that they should torture out of them, with some real, a great many imaginary signs of common origin, especially if no allowance be made for the like origin of all language by a natural process that must produce everywhere, especially as to the true roots of words, a more or less perceptible harmony of result. A common conclusion to an Arabic letter happens to be a play on our sound of adieu, "*Elbaki Eddua*,"—

May all the rest be well. We are not the less sure that the word *à Dieu* is a commendation to God of the friend from whom we part. Many analogies, even when they look valid, are misleading enough. It is not at all necessary to strain for them, as the author from whom the above-quoted specimens of Persian and Arabic English are selected does, when he derives "the rubs" of fortune, soured, perhaps, by sharp experience, from rubs, the Arabic plural of rebs (Latin, *ribes*), a gooseberry. "Rubs," he says, "is the plural of rebs, and means calamities, uneasiness, in our sense . . . 'ay, there's the rub.'"

Sir William Jones looked rather to the Persian than to the Sanskrit as a great parent language; but the enthusiasm for the study of Sanskrit spread among scholars, and when in 1808 Frederick Schlegel published his work on the 'Language and Wisdom of the Indians,' he was considered to have discovered a new intellectual world in giving the common name of Indo-Germanic, since altered to Indo-European, to the languages of India, Persia, Greece, Rome, Germany, that he declared to be in brotherhood. In 1816 Francis Bopp published his 'Conjugations System,' comparing the grammar of Sanskrit with that of Greek and Latin, Persian and German; and in 1833 appeared the first volume of Bopp's 'Comparative Grammar of Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Lithuanian, Slavonic, Gothic, and German.' The 'Etymological Researches' of Professor Pott, which appeared in 1833 and 1836, contributed also very greatly towards the establishment of a right system of study.

There were four dozen letters in the Sanskrit alphabet, including five peculiar sounds called cerebrals (derived from the dentals, and formed by pointing the tongue perpendicularly to the roof of the mouth), and ten aspirates instead of the two that sufficed for Latin, and the three that are all we have in modern English. The discrepancy of alphabet tends greatly to the multiplication of resemblances by enlarging the considerable power that a keen analogy hunter always takes to himself in the transmutation of consonants and vowels, a power of which Mr. Pliny Earle Chase, the American author of a valuable list of 'Sanskrit and English Analogues,' complains that it has been caricatured by the sciolist into the doctrine "all consonants are mutually interchangeable, and all vowels are of no account;"

while the irreverent tyro, puzzled at such a derivation of wig as pilus, pelo, peluco, paruik, periwig, wig, offers to derive "fox" from "rainy day," and "mango" from "King Jeremiah." Of the analogies in Mr. Chase's vocabulary,<sup>1</sup> a few, like Abhisana: Abusing—or, Accommodate: Cāmadas, giving what is wished,—are marked fairly and properly with A for Accidental. A selection from the rest will best explain their character :

"A, an : as demonstrative radicals and also negative prefixes.—Abba, Abbot : Pá to nourish, Pati a master.—Abdomen : Dhá to give, to hold, Dháman the body.—Abominate : Bhám to be angry or impatient.—Abound : Pad to heap together, Und to wet.—Accuse : Cus (cusati) to speak.—Ace : Ecas, one.—Ache : Acas, pain, sin.—Acrid : Chard to bite, Crt to cut, Cr' to hurt. Acris : the edge of a sword.—Acropolis : Agra, the summit, Pallí village.—Agog : Cac to be thirsty, Cácf to desire.—Ambassador : Pas to go, Bhas to speak.—Amen : Mun to promise, Man to think, Om verily.—Ample : Ubh to fill, Pul to be great.—Angel : Tsel to go, Ats to move, to speak.—Ankle : Ankal to bind or tie.—Answer : Anusárin following, Anusváras, echo, Anu, after, Svr to sing, to praise, Svar to sound, to reprove.—Ape : Capis.—Apothecary : Dha to place.—Apron : Pra, forth.—Apt : A'p, to obtain, Aptas fit.—Arctic : Resas a bear.—Area : Ragr to go.—Argue : Rag to doubt, Ragh, Lagh to speak.—Art : Arthas, intelligent, Kr to do, Kartr an agent, a maker (कर्तार, ars).—Aruspice : Aras, swift, r to go, Spaç to inform, to touch, to make evident, Spaças a spy.—Auspice : Av to go, Vis a bird.—Ass : Açvas a horse.—Assemble, Sam together, Púl to collect, Samb to collect.—Avarice : Vr, Vrt to choose ; Vrdh to increase, Av to desire.—Awkward : Ak to go crookedly.—Bad : Bádh to oppose, annoy.—Badge : Pats to make evident.—Bandage, Bandana : Bandh, to bind or tie, Bandhanas, a ligature.—Barb, barbarian : Barb to go, Vr to cover, Bharbh to injure, Varvaras a barbarian, woolly hair ; Bárbaras, a blockhead.—Bard : Prd, Mrd, to delight.—Bargain : Argh to cost, Pr to transact business.—Baron : Bharus, a husband, a lord.—Bashful : Bhes to fear.—Beacon : Pats to make evident.—Beauty : Bhá to shine, beauty.—Bell : Bal to strike, Pel, Vell to move back and forth.—Berry : Bhacs to eat.—Bigot : Cut to be dishonest, Cút to be niggardly.—Billow : Balaś strength, Baláha water, Pul to collect, heap up.—Blaze : Plas to burn, Bhlás to shine.—Brass : Bhrás to shine.—Blight : Bal to kill, Ghal to injure.—Boot, Bottle : Put to embrace, to bind.—Brother : Bhrátr.—Son : Sunus.—Daughter : Duhítr.—Sister : Svasr.—Father : Pitr, Pa to protect, nourish.—Mother : Mátr, a mother, the earth.—Brow : Bhru, the brow, Bhruđ to cover.—Buck : Buccas a he-goat.—Butt : But to strike.—Cabin : Cub to cover.—Cach-innate, Cackle, Goggle : Cach, Gaggh, to laugh.—Canal : Chan to dig.—Candy : Chandas, candied treacle, Chand to break, Chanda a kind of sugar-cane.—Care : Cr, to make, to do ; Cáras effort, Cárá affliction.—Caul : Cul to collect.—Cloak : Hlag to cover.—Cow : Gaus.—Coy, Cozy : Cus to embrace.—Cuddle : Cud to collect.—Dagger : Dagh to strike, to kill.—Dainty : Dantas a tooth.—Etymology : Satyas, true."

<sup>1</sup> 'Sanskrit and English Analogues.' By Pliny Earle Chase. From the Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society. Philadelphia and London, 1860.

Etymology may be derived as a word from the Sanskrit Satyas, true ; but it is evident from this list, in which I have endeavoured to represent in just proportion the strength and the weakness of the argument from analogies, that, while many indisputable marks of connexion between Sanskrit and the chief European languages do exist, there is no lack of ingenuity applied to the discovery of false analogies, by searching through a language overcrowded with excess of roots to pick and choose from (as a score of words for sun, whence to pick heli, though surya and rawi are more common), and supplied also with a score of extra letter-sounds to be accommodated to our simpler alphabets.

But there are some very striking analogies of grammar, like the asmi, asi, asti, answering to sum, es, est, and santi to sunt, they are. Thus, Sanskrit nouns have an English or Latin genitive singular in s, and a Latin accusative singular in m, a genitive plural in âm, Latin um, a dative and ablative plural in -bhyas, Latin -bus. The comparison of Sanskrit adjectives by -tara and -tama corresponds to the ter in præter, inter, propter, and the superlative in optinus ; the Sanskrit superlative in ishta corresponds to the Greek in ἰστος ; vay-âm and yuy-âm represent in Sanskrit we and you. A table placing in succession the declension of the same pronouns in Sanskrit, Zend, Greek, Latin, Gothic, and Anglo-Saxon shows indistinct though indisputable connexion, and the connexion is still more conspicuous between the Sanskrit and Zend, and the Greek and Latin verbs. Thus

Sanskrit.	Zend.	Greek.	Latin.	English.
dâdâ-mi	dadhâ-mi	δίδω-μι	do	I give
dâda-si	dadhâ-si	δίδω-ς	da-s	Thou givest
dâdâ-ti	dadhâi-ti	δίδω-σι	da-t	He gives
dad-mâs	dadê-mahi	δίδω-μες	da-mus	We give
dat-thâ	daz-ta	δίδω-τε	da-tis	You give
dâd-a-ti	dad-ê-nti	δίδω-νσι	da-nt	They give

And in the imperfect :

Sanskrit.	Greek.
âdadâ-m	ἔδιδω-ν
âdadâ-s	ἔδιδω-ς
âdadâ-t	ἔδιδω(τ)
âdad-ma	ἔδιδω-μες
âdat-ta	ἔδιδω-τε
âdad-us	ἔδιδω-(σα)ν

Or let us take this fragment of another form of conjugation :

Sanskrit.	Zend.	Greek.	Latin.	Gothic.
<i>I can bear.</i>		<i>I would bear.</i>		<i>I may bear.</i>
bhâr-ê-yam	bar-ô-i	φέρ-οι-(μ) !	fer-a-m	bair-a-u
bhâr-ê-s	bar-ô-i-s	φέρ-οι-s	fer-â-s	bair-ai-ε
bhâr-ê-t	bar-ô-i-d	φέρ-οι	fer-a-t	bair-ai

Not less striking is the evidence afforded by this table of the numerals, of which the first five will suffice for illustration :

Sanskrit.	Zend.	Greek.	Latin.	Gothic.	Anglo-Saxon.	English.
ê-ka (ai-ka)	ai-va	(οι-ν) ἕν	{ oi-no-s unus }	ai-na	â-n	o-ne
dwa	dwa	δύω, δύο	duo	toai	twâ	two
tri	thri	τρεις (τρε-ες)	três (tre-es)	thri	threo	three
chatwâr-as	chathwâr	{ τέτταρ-ες πίσυρ-ες }	quatuor	fidvôr	feower	four
pānchan	panchan	{ πέντε πέμπε }	quinque	fimf	fif	five <sup>1</sup>

Six, seven, eight, nine, ten, being in Sanskrit schash, sâpta, ashta, nava, daza.—There can be no doubt then of some ancient relation between the languages now brought together as the Indo-European family ; although, as to the order and character of the relationship between them, and the truth of the inference commonly drawn that all the nations of the family came originally from a part of Asia corresponding to the country now known as the Punjaub—or as to the evidence for harmony of race that may be drawn from these observed harmonies of language—skilled opinions differ widely. Professor Max Müller agrees with the majority in holding that “before the ancestors of the Indians and Persians started for the south, and the leaders of the Greek, Roman, Celtic, Teutonic, and Slavonic colonies marched towards the shores of Europe, there was a small clan of Aryans, settled probably on the highest elevation of Central Asia, speaking a language not yet Sanskrit or Greek, or German, but containing the dialectical germ of all ;<sup>2</sup>—while Dr. R. G. Latham, who has for many years been devoting his whole energies to the study of

<sup>1</sup> These tables are taken from a very useful student's book, ‘The Student's Handbook of Comparative Grammar.’ By the Rev. T. Clark. London, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> ‘Lectures on the Science of Language,’ p. 199. London, 1861.

philology, has lately come to the conclusion that there is tacit assumption but no evidence of our Eastern origin. Observing that "surely in this there is confusion between the primary diffusion of mankind over the world at large, and those secondary movements by which, according to even the ordinary hypothesis, the Lithuanic, &c., came from Asia into Europe . . . . he looks upon the Sanskrit as a language *towards* which, rather than *from* which, we are to argue. We are to end rather than begin with it."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Crawford, the learned President of the Ethnological Society, whose authority is unequalled in Malay, and high in other forms of Oriental literature, has also thrown very grave doubt on the theory maintained by Professor Max Müller, of identity of race among the members of the Aryan or Indo-European family.<sup>2</sup> The term Aryan (Arya, noble) is derived from Aryana, the supposed parent country of the people who spoke Sanskrit, and the name is considered to be derived from the word Ar, to plough or till, showing that nation to have been agricultural. Two branches of Aryans are thought to have migrated, in some far distant historic time,—one to the south-east, to civilise, and even in a great measure to people, Hindostan; the other north-west, to perform the same services for Europe and Western Asia. Before these migrations we are to suppose that there were no Hindus in India; no Greeks, Italians, Germans, Slavonians, or Celts in Europe; but only such barbarians as we may now find in the mountainous parts of Hindostan. Of this history Sanskrit itself tells us nothing; the very name Sanskrit, which means "adorned, completed, perfect," is a recent creation of grammarians. There is no mention of any parent country in the Sanskrit books. The names of heroes, gods, and places are those of Hindostan, and more especially of its north-western part. They who spoke this language came probably from the north-west, which has always supplied conquerors. A fairer people than the natives of India, they in due time, Mr. Crawford thinks, were by admixture lost

<sup>1</sup> Latham's 'Elements of Comparative Philology,' pp. 612, 620. London, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> 'Transactions of the Ethnological Society,' pp. 268-286. New Series. Vol. i. London, 1861.



among them. So "the Turkish conquerors of India are at present hardly distinguishable from the Hindus, and the Arabic blood is not distinguishable in the Persians or the people of Southern Spain." If, as their name suggests, they were agricultural, they were not likely to undertake far distant migration; if they were roving shepherds, they would not have civilised the tribes they conquered.

But very different in form and intellect are the races of men tied together by this theory. Some are black, like the pure Hindus; some brown, like the Persians and Turks; some very fair, like the Scandinavians. They are weakly in Bengal; robust in Europe. In Europe they have advanced within the historical period from the savage state to the highest civilisation; in Western and Central Asia, after a precocious advance they have stood still, and made less progress in a thousand years than Europeans in a hundred. A handful of Europeans held in subjection millions of others whom this theory supposes to be of the same blood as themselves.

Authentic history gives no evidence of such physical changes in any race of men. The descendants of the Spaniards who migrated to America three hundred and fifty years ago, where they have kept their race unmixed, do not differ in physical form from their brethren in Andalusia. Negroes who have been transplanted for almost as many years are not to be distinguished in form from the still native Africans.

But while physical change is thus limited, language, valuable as it is in tracing the migrations of a people, gives by no means infallible evidence of race. For above two thousand years Hebrew has not been the spoken language of the Jews. In their own country they once spoke Greek, they now speak Arabic. Within three centuries, millions of Africans transported to America have lost their native languages, while others, some of German, some of Latin origin, are substituted for them. In Italy, before the Roman conquests, at least half a dozen native languages were spoken, until one supplanted all the rest.

India, moreover, apart from the Aryans, was not without Hindus. Among a southern population of thirty-two millions, nine languages are spoken, called Dravidian, of which Mr.

Caldwell, their chief student, finds that they are "not even a remote offshoot" from the Sanskrit.

Having opposed the assumption that similarity of language proves identity of race, Mr. Crawford shows the weak points in the argument for affinity even of language. Changes of sound in the transfer of words from one language to another seem to him "so great, and even so capricious, that it is utterly impossible to bring them under any general rule." The Latin *filius* is Spanish *hijo*; *femina*, *hembra*; *turbare*, *azorar*; *votum*, *boda*; *jactare*, *echar*; *oculus*, *ojo*. As the languages diverge in pronunciation the corruption will increase. In the dialects of Polynesia, the word *sheep* has been adopted as *hipa*; *ox*, from *beef*, *pifa*; *rice*, *laiki*; and *bread*, *palora*.

Affinity is especially said to be deduced from comparison of words that represent familiar ideas, as father, mother, brother, moon, air, sky, water, earth; and from the finding of verbal roots that suggest ideas of the most frequent occurrence. But Mr. Crawford, from his own experience, "is satisfied that the words which a rude nation borrows from a more civilised one with which it holds intercourse, are naturally and necessarily those expressing the most familiar ideas." From sixty-five familiar words, Dr. Prichard deduced the community of language and race between Celts and Hindus. Among them are father, mother, brother, sister, man, woman, moon, cloud, earth, sea, dry land, lake, wax, honey, night, day, horse, cow, name. But the words for all these ideas are clearly taken from the Latin of the Christian missionaries. Moreover, nearly all the examples quoted by Dr. Prichard are only synonyms of native words. Thus, in Erse or Irish, for man there is, indeed, fear, corrupted from the Latin *vir*; but there is also the native word *duine*. For moon there is *luan*, *luna*; but there are also the native words *geleach* and *re*. *Di*, day, is from Latin; but the native word is *I'a*. And of the last two words the native are the current words; the Latin are used only, as in *Di luan* (*Dies Lunæ*), to form the days of the week. *Bo*, from *bos*, is a cow; but the native word is *mart*. Horse has two Latin terms, each from *equus*, and *capull* from *caballus*; but the native word is *marc*. For the sea there are eleven names, of which two only are Latin. Much is said of the words that express father and mother in related languages,

these words being always, in their earliest stage, monosyllables consisting of a labial m, p, b, or f, and the simple breathing a. Yet obviously this arises from the perfection of the suckling infant's lips. Everywhere one of these sounds must be the first cry of recognition to the parent.

Mr. Crawford argues then from the languages to which he has himself given special attention. The Hindus introduced their religion into the Malay Islands by means of Sanskrit; and the Malay tongues, certainly not Indo-European, contain at least ten times as many distinct Sanskrit words as have been found by strained etymologies in Celtic, including such familiar words as head, face, hair, shoulder, limb, brother, family, earth, cloud, day, sea, glad, sorry, all, only, silent, to speak, &c. In Javanese are, besides most of these, the Sanskrit words for man, woman, son, daughter, sun, moon, throat, hand, dog. In the island of Bali the Sanskrit, *surya*, has superseded the native name for the sun. The Polynesian language differs wholly in structure and phonetic character from the Malay, yet the hundred words it has adopted from Malay include ideas so familiar as face, hair, heart, ear, breasts, finger or toe, earth, water, stone, hill, road or path, fire, sea, bird, feather, root, wood, leaf, flower, fruit, to plant, to drink, to strike, to cry, to die, to dig, to bury. Words equally simple have been adopted from Malay into the native African tongue of Madagascar; and in the language of Southern India most remote from Sanskrit, the Tamil, Sanskrit words have been taken for air, water, fish, milk, flower, white, small, to speak, to strike, to kill, to get. Or we need look no farther than our own language to observe how many elementary words Saxon English has adopted from the Normans,—face, stomach, arm, palm, sole, nape, spine, flank, joint, tendon, veins; uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, corpse; flower, fruit, grain; mountain, valley, cave, bank, rock, river, lake, island, ocean, air; long, round, silent, mute, calm, just; to pass, to place, to touch, to move, to stir, to alter, to change, to turn, with such words as pain and pleasure, war, battle, danger, peril, chance, fortune. In Spanish and Portuguese, elementary words, even the name of the indigenous olive, are found to have been adopted from the Arabs during the time of their occupation.

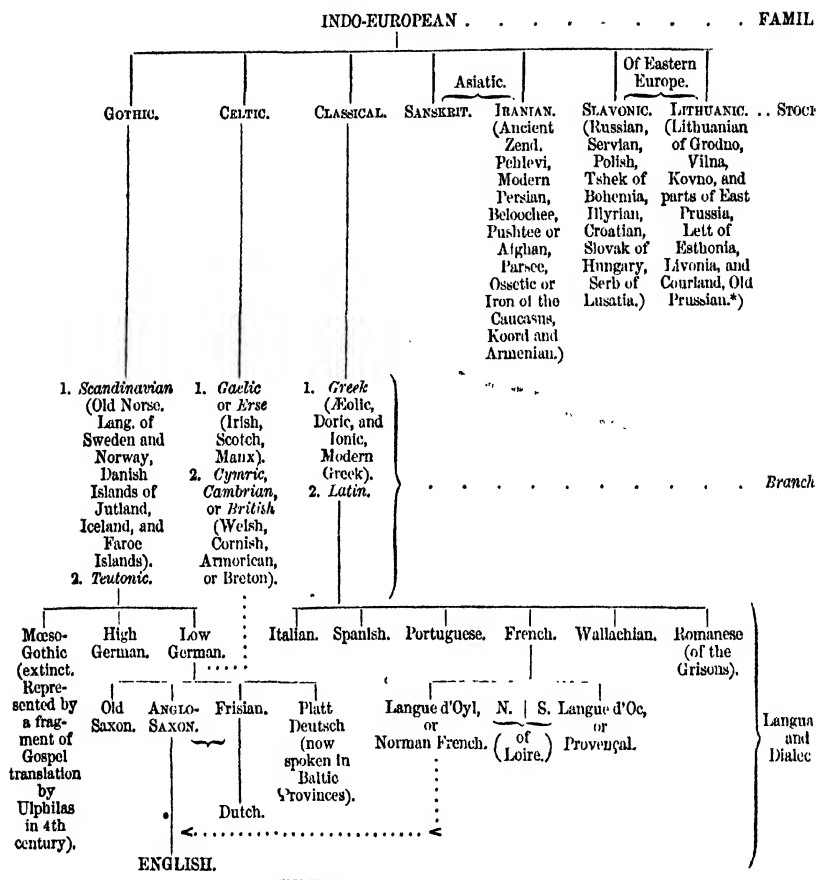
The unquestionably large infusion of Sanskrit in Zend, and,

in so far as it is not mixed with Arabic, in modern Persian, Mr. Crawford considers an argument "in favour of the theory, otherwise very probable, which places the nation that had Sanskrit for its mother tongue not in India, but in a country north-west of it;" but he is not prepared to "admit the claim of a common descent between Hindu, Greek, and Teuton, for that would amount to allowing that there was no difference in the faculties of the people that produced Homer and Shakespeare, and those that have produced nothing better than the authors of the Mahabarat and Ramayana; no difference between the homekeeping Hindus, who never made a foreign conquest of any kind, and the nations who discovered, conquered, and peopled a new world."

The English language, in the view we have been discussing, belongs to the Teutonic "branch" of the Gothic "stock" of the Indo-European "family." Its family connexions, near and remote, will be most clearly set forth in the form of a short family tree. We read, then, on the following page, according to the Indo-European theory, the pedigree of English.

Among different writers there will be found a few unimportant variations from this table in arrangement and nomenclature. Slavonic and Lithuanic, for example, may be combined into Letto-Slavic, and the mystical number of seven stocks either reduced to six, or preserved by separating High German as a Germanic stock from the rest of the Gothic, which may then be called Teutonic. Classical may be called Pelasgic, or it may be called Græco-Latin; and Iranian may be called Medo-Persic. Such variations involve no confusion, and serve only to remind us that all classification is conventional. When the young student has learnt a formula by rote, let him beware how he regards it as one perfect chrysolite of settled knowledge.

As to the Teutonic origin of English, and its relation to Latin through the Norman French, no question is possible, and in following the early story of the language we shall find it convenient to refer back sometimes to the following table of its pedigree.



\* From the 11th to the 13th century all Prussia was Lithuanian to the frontiers of Pomerania, where it was Slavonic.

## CHAPTER II.

IN the year 1834 an ancient burial-mound at Gristhorpe was found to contain, under remains of loose oak-branches, a log of oak, 7 ft. by 3 ft., that had been cut down <sup>The oldest inhabitant.</sup> with a small axe, then split with wedges, and hollowed with flint chisels, into a coffin for an ancient Briton. In the coffin lay the Briton's skeleton, 6 ft. 2 in. tall, black as ebony with the natural ink made by filtration, through the tannin of the oak, of water that had taken iron out of the pyrites of the surrounding clay. The man lay on his right side, buried, by accident or design, with his head to the south and his face to the rising sun. With him there had been interred spear, javelin, and arrows; their shafts, as usual, lost by decay; the remaining spear-head being of some compound of copper, the javelin-head flint, the arrow-heads of flint shaped rudely. There was a small ornament of horn, or fish-bone, that might have been fixed to the blunt end of the javelin. A pin of horn, or fish-bone, at the breast, lay where it had secured the goat (?) skin wrapper, and by the side of the skeleton was a round basket, or dish, 6 in. wide, made of bark stitched across the bottom and at the sides with sinews of animals. Decomposed matter in the basket seemed to have once been food, and much was found of a decayed vegetable substance that seemed to be misletoe. Grimm, in his 'History of the German Language,' mentions, among the contents of such tree-coffins found in Germany, "dead shoes" made of wood, shoes being supplied to the dead for, says Aubrey, "their having to pass through a great lande full of thornes and furzen." Such coffins were designed also to serve as canoes in which the dead might cross the waters by which they are separated from the living.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'The Primeval Antiquities of Denmark.' By J. J. A. Worsaae. Translated by W. J. Thoms. London, 1849. This book is the original authority upon antiquities of the Stone, Bronze, and Iron periods.

The countryman of ours, whose bones were found at Gris-  
 Stone,           thorpe, belonged to what is called the Stone period  
 Bronze, and   of civilization, though he lived when copper had  
 Iron Periods. been smelted. Antiquaries agree now in accepting the doc-  
 trine of three periods of civilization, a Stone, a Bronze,  
 and an Iron period, deduced some twenty years since by Pro-  
 fessor Worsaae of Copenhagen, from an examination of the  
 Danish barrows. From the remains in Danish bogs, it appears  
 that the changes of climate have produced three great epochs  
 in the vegetation of Denmark. There was first a remote  
 epoch, when the spruce fir, now no longer a Danish tree, pre-  
 dominated. Upon this followed an epoch of the oak, which  
 is now rare. After the oaks came the present period of  
 beeches. The Danish coast is bare, but there are great beech  
 forests in the interior. Very recently Sir Charles Lyell<sup>1</sup> has  
 called attention also to the evidences of the three periods of  
 ancient human civilization, found in the old burial places by  
 Professor Worsaae and others, and not found in burial places  
 only.

The earliest of these periods of civilization is that in which  
 men had not advanced beyond the device of tools and weapons  
 made by chipping flint and other hard stones into axes, ham-  
 mers, spear-heads, &c. In the second period a metal easily  
 recognised and fused, copper, hardened with a tenth part of tin  
 into bronze, was the material chosen. In the third period civi-  
 lization had advanced to the use of iron, which is in its ores less  
 easily distinguishable from stone, and, although more useful, is less  
 easy of extraction. Antiquaries commonly consider that among  
 ourselves the Anglo-Saxons at their first coming used iron, but  
 that the ancient Celts, who preceded them, used only bronze  
 weapons and tools. On the first coming of the Celts into  
 Europe, says theory founded on ancient traditions and research  
 among the tombs, they found coasts, and the patches of tolerably  
 clear land into which men with only fire and flint to aid them  
 could have penetrated, thinly peopled with the race or races  
 now known as "the Stone people." Of this apparently prim-  
 eval population, the Basques and the Lap- or Finlanders are  
 thought by many to be a remainder, although it is noticeable

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The Geological Evidences of the Antiquity of Man.' London, 1863.

that the Basques are a freedom-loving, active, thriving race, not at all like the remnant of a savage people in decay. Be that as it may, man in his earliest state seems everywhere to have been ignorant of the use of metals; hunting, fishing, fighting, labouring, by help of instruments chipped and rubbed out of stone or bone.

How early may have been that earliest state? Underneath a fallen fir-tree of the pre-historic Danish fir epoch, deep under a growth of peat that seems to be at least the accumulation of four thousand years, a flint instrument fashioned by man's hands has been found. Sir Charles Lyell calls attention also to the shell-mounds or "kitchen-middens" on all but the western coasts of the Danish Islands, masses of shells of eatable fish mixed with picked bones that, when marrow-bones, have all been broken for their marrow. Such heaps are still made on the sea-shore near their settlements by savage tribes of America and Australia. These ancient heaps upon the Danish shore are sometimes 1000 feet long and nearly 200 feet wide. "Scattered all through them are flint knives, hatchets, and other instruments of stone, horn, wood, and bone, with fragments of coarse pottery, mixed with charcoal and cinders, but never any implements of bronze, still less of iron." And it is characteristic of them that the shells, although of living species, are not as they are now to be found in the brackish inland waters of the Baltic. The oyster-shells in such heaps were thrown there when the oyster attained its full size where it is now unable to live; when, therefore, the ocean had freer access, and Jutland, perhaps, was an archipelago. Cockle, mussel, and periwinkle shells are also, in these heaps, of their full natural size, as they were drawn very long since from water in which a third of that size is now the limit of their stunted growth. A few skulls, ascribed to men of this Stone age, found in the peat bogs, resemble those of the Laplanders.

To the same period belong ancient Swiss Lake-dwellings, built upon piles, and Irish crannoges. Like the Pœonians of whom Herodotus tells, and like existing savages in New Guinea and elsewhere, men of the Stone period sometimes lived together for self-defence in huts built upon wooden platforms raised as islands in a lake, connected with the shore by a causeway that could be cut away in case of attack, the fish of the lake then



victualling the besieged. Remains of very many such villages, with others like them of the bronze period, have of late years been traced in the bed of the Swiss lakes. Some of them were evidently destroyed by fire, the nature of the shelving lake-bottom having made it impossible to fix the piles and raise the wooden platform beyond reach of burning missiles.

Of the yet imperfect attempts to estimate the antiquity of these remains, Sir Charles Lyell cites three,—that of M. Morlot, founded on the growth of the Delta of the Pinière, which flows into the Lake of Geneva near Villeneuve; that of M. Troyon, founded on the separation of Yverdun from the Lake of Neuchâtel; and that of M. Victor Gilliéron, founded on a calculation of the rate of separation of the old convent of St. Jean from the Lake of Brienne. These rough and insecure methods of calculation carry back the date of the Lake-villages of the Stone period some 5000 or 7000 years.

The wooden handles of the tools and weapons of the Stone period have only in a few instances escaped decay. A complete hatchet found in a bog near Cookstown in Tyrone showed the cutting wedge of flint thrust by its narrow and blunt end through the cleft in a sort of wooden bat. With such a hatchet a ring might be chipped round a tree-stem, into which ring fire could be put, and so by alternate chipping and charring even a large trunk might be divided. Trees so felled are, in fact, found in the peat-bogs. There has been found also in a bog a tree-boat, hollowed by stone and fire, that was made portable by means of handles like those of a butcher's tray. Even fishhooks were shaped out of flint by this primitive people, and there are found in their tombs grooved or perforated stones that may have been used for sinking fishing lines. The Stone people themselves have been occasionally dug up dressed in skins, sewn together merely with strips of skin, pieces of hide serving for shoes. Their trinkets, as we find them still, were knobs of bone and amber beads, sometimes formed into chains.

These people did not burn the bodies of their dead.

Burial was in what are now called cromlechs (hunch-  
Cromlechs. slabs),<sup>1</sup> and it has been well suggested by Mr. Thoms

<sup>1</sup> “*Cromb-lech* (as it was formerly written) signifies a crooked, flat stone. Had it been *cromb-lech* (which in pronunciation differs little or nothing from *cromb-lech*), it would have signified a round, flat stone, and been synonymous

that the word Cromlech should be confined to the burial-place of the Stone period. A complete cromlech is, then, a slightly elevated mound of earth, surrounded at its base by a number of upright stones, and having a chamber or several chambers formed of large stones on its summit. Such burial-places abound on the eastern coasts of Jutland, Slesvig, and Holstein; on the north and west coast of Iceland; and on the coasts of Fühnen. They are rare on the west coast of Denmark, and still more rare in the interior. But we must not accept the Danish antiquary's inference of the eastern origin of the Stone people from the rarity of their remains on the west coast of Denmark, without remembering that the geologist accounts for this by great encroachment of the sea upon those western shores since men were buried in the cromlechs. Single mounds vary in length from sixty feet or less to a hundred and twenty feet or more—one is four hundred feet long; their breadth being<sup>d</sup> from sixteen to twenty-four feet, but the breadth of the longest is even thirty or forty feet. Sometimes there is a double enclosure of the base, with stones brought evidently from a distance. On the top of the mounds and sunk in them were placed the burial chambers. Each of these is six or eight feet high, and formed of several stones, rough outside and flat inside, placed close together, in a circle of from five to seven feet in diameter or in an oval of from twelve to sixteen feet long, the chinks being filled up with small stones. A great capstone, often eight or ten feet wide, smooth and flat on the under side and rough above, is its roof. The floor of such a tomb is paved partly with flat stones and partly with small flints that seem to have been strongly heated. Enclosed roofed approaches are rare, and lead only to the largest cromlechs. Generally there is an opening between two supporting stones, its place indicated by two flat stones or a row of smaller stones along the hillside. Originally covered with earth except at the top, many of these cromlech-tombs now stand fully exposed. The skeletons

with *quoit*, the name by which these erections are here, and in some parts of Wales, most commonly known." "The Land's-End District: its Antiquities, &c." By Richard Edmonds. London, 1862. Crob, in Welsh, is, according to Richards's Welsh Dictionary, "a round heap or hunch;" Llech, "any broad flat stone, a gravestone, slate, a bakestone."

found in them show that after a corpse had been deposited the tomb was filled with clay, or earth and pebbles, in which room had to be scooped for the next person buried. Bodies seem to have been usually placed in a sitting posture in the corners. The skeleton of one has been found kneeling in the middle, because there was no corner left for it to sit in. The same arrangements are found in the small round cromlechs, consisting usually of one chamber made with a cap upon five stones. The theory that these remains are Druid or other altars, or places of justice, is as far from fact as the legend that accounts for their frequency in the south-east of Ireland. There they are called giants' beds, and said to have been made by Diarmaid O'Duibhné, when he ran away with Grainné the wife of Fionn M'Cumhail, and, being pursued by Fionn for a year and a day, never slept twice in the same bed. The simple fact that the great stones are smooth—often smoothed by artificial splitting—on the inner side, but rough and unshaped outside, shows that they were no more designed for altars than for beds. St. Iltut's Hermitage in Brecknockshire, Arthur's Stone in Glamorganshire, the Cromlechs of Anglesey, the Quoits of Cornwall, Wayland Smith's Cave at Ashbury, Berks, and Kit's Coty House on Blue Bell Hill, near Rochester, are familiar examples of these ancient burial-places.

The burial-places of the Bronze period are barrows. They have no stone chambers, but consist merely of earth with heaps of small stones. The makers of these barrows burnt their dead; enclosed the ashes in vessels of clay within metal or small stone cysts about a foot long; placed these in the mound, but in no defined part of it; and covered all with stones and earth. A few of these more recent barrows were formed over cromlechs, to save labour, the urns being buried at the side. Arms and ornaments of the dead were sometimes placed among the embers of his funeral pile; these were then covered with stones, and the barrow with the urn in it was placed over that. Sometimes burnt bones, not enclosed in an urn, but surrounded with small stones, are found at the edge of a family barrow. Sometimes a cinerary urn has been cheaply and carelessly interred without raising a barrow over it.

The Bronze  
Period. Bar-  
rows.

These Bronze people, who burnt their dead, are said to be the Celts, in this country the ancient Gael and Cymry, with some of whom there may have come over a certain number of the more ancient and less civilized people of the mainland; or who found England, like the rest of Europe, thinly peopled with that earlier race of which the stones they shaped are all the traces that remain. The men who used bronze or copper, hardened with a slight mixture of tin, made axes of the shape still common, picks, sickles (that suggest corn-growing), celts (from the Latin *celtis*, a chisel), which are chisel- or axe-heads hollowed to receive their wooden handles, and sometimes provided with an ear through which to pass a thong for binding them more firmly. There are found also in their tombs bronze swords about two feet and a half long, or shorter, two-edged, with the thickness in the middle of the blades, and no guards to their hilts; the hilts, which were very small, being sometimes of wood and nails, sometimes of bronze spread over clay, sometimes even covered with gold plate or woven about with gold wire. The scabbards were of wood usually tipped with metal and sheathed with leather. These Celts had spear-heads a foot long, and there has been found the end of a battle-axe that is fifteen inches long, and weighs seven pounds. There have been found also a few large round shields in thin plates of ornamented bronze, the edges turned over a thicker frame of metal wire, the handle a crossbar within the central boss. But of the more common shields of leather-covered wood there are left only the metal borders, or the small round plates of metal with which they may have been studded and strengthened. There are dug up also the long curved lures or war trumpets of the Bronze period, which stand about three and a half feet high in their curved shape, curved for shouldering musketwise when played, with the broad round of their flat mouths by the players' knees; they would be six feet long if straightened. Several of these old British war trumpets, blown by the antiquaries of to-day, have played a ghostly music in a tone not absolutely dull—something between a trumpet- and a bugle-note. In peace this people wore trinkets and ornaments, hairpin: a foot long, adorned and inlaid with gold, combs of bronze and bone riveted together, hair rings, circlets, diadems,

neck rings, elastic spiral armlets like great corkscrews. These things, often adorned with characteristic spiral, ring, and wave patterns, are found in the tombs covered with a greenish rust, the bronze below, when it is got at, shining like gold. But the true gold never rusts, and this metal also was used by the Celts in bracelets, finger rings, and even in some little cups about four inches high and seven wide across the mouth, which may possibly have been a luxurious form of cinerary urn for those whose heirs would not grudge burying their ashes in their gold.

The Bronze period was followed by that of men who had learnt to extract iron from its stone-like ore. The  
The Iron Period. people of this period did not burn their dead. Their barrows, often of exaggerated size, are more rare, and some of them contain wooden sepulchral chambers. The iron swords are larger than the swords of bronze, have guarded hilts, and are not usually two-edged. There is in this period less delicacy of ornamental work, and together with the use of iron, appears for the first time evidence of the use of silver.

The whole body, then, of the Celtic Britons certainly did  
The Celtic Britons. not consist of mere naked barbarians. From the remotest period to which we can look back there seem to have been more races than one in occupation of our islands. That Herodotus probably meant by the Cassiterides, or Tin Islands, the same Britain which Aristotle was the first to name as "two islands, which are very large, Albion and Ierne, called the Britannie, which lie beyond the Celtæ;" that Polybius, writing 150 B.C., describes the method of obtaining and preparing tin in the Britannie Isles; that the Phœnicians, trading from their port of Gades (now Cadiz), obtained tin from Cornwall and the Scilly Islands, keeping the source of this commerce so close a secret that, as Strabo tells, a Phœnician captain, followed and watched by Roman vessels, ran his ship ashore rather than lead to betrayal of the mystery; that the Phœnician trade was tracked early in Julius Cæsar's time by Publius Crassus; are the familiar and almost the only details of written British history before Cæsar's invasion. The tenth part of tin in the bronze used almost throughout Europe in the Bronze period, may have come chiefly from Cornwall. Advocates of a very high previous civilization in at least some part of

Britain ascribe it occasionally to the influence of supposed Phœnician settlements.

But in Cæsar's account of Britain we find the race of the Belgæ, who, he says, were chiefly sprung from the Germans,<sup>1</sup> most powerful of all the nations west of <sup>The Belgæ.</sup> the Rhine, in occupation of the coast of Gaul opposite South-eastern Britain, and evidently in occupation also of our own south-eastern coasts. Cæsar notes that in language, customs, form of houses, names of towns, the South Britons agreed with the opposite Gauls; that Divitiacus, king of the Suesones, a tribe of Belgæ, was the most powerful in Gaul, and had empire even in Britain; that there was one name also, Cingetorix, for a king of Belgæ on the Moselle and for a king in Kent. Cæsar speaks by report of the Northern or Celtic Britons as a pastoral people dressed in skins; but the men of South Britain who contended with him, although in Roman phrase barbarians, had knowledge to give to the youths of Gaul, and used Greek letters in conveying it; had commerce also, according to Strabo,<sup>2</sup> on the Rhine, Seine, Loire, and Garonne—exported corn, cattle, gold, silver, iron, hides, slaves, and dogs, and imported ivory, bracelets, necklaces, amber, vessels of glass, and small wares. Of London, only a hundred years after the time of Cæsar's invasion, Tacitus says that it was chiefly noted for its gatherings of traders.<sup>3</sup> The country to the south in Cæsar's time was cleared and ploughed. When he first crossed he found the corn-harvest just gathered, except one field. Without roads the British army could not have had, as it is said to have had, its chief strength in war-chariots. Without some political organization the people could not have sent, as they did, a fleet of ships in aid of the Veneti, when Cæsar made war against them.

The Sussex iron, again, was not unknown to the South Britons,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Sic reperiebat plerosque Belgas esse ortos a Germanis, Rhenumque antiquitus traductos, propter loci fertilitatem ibi consedissee, Gallosque qui ea loca incolerent expulisse." De B. G. ii. 4. Tacitus, who notes the same thing, speaks also of the language of the Æstui, a German tribe, as "Lingua Britannicæ propior" (Mor. Germ. 45).

<sup>2</sup> Strabo, lib. iv. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Tacitus, Ann. xiv. 33.

<sup>4</sup> "In maritimis ferrum, sed ejus exigua est copia: ære utuntur importato." Cæsar, De B. G. v. 12. See Mr. Lewin's Essay on 'The Invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar.' London, 1859.

and herein also they seem to be allied to the Germanic race. To the first advent of the "Anglo-Saxons" it is usual (though not perhaps entirely just) to trace the ancient remains of the "Iron period." In the subsequent survey of Britain by Ptolemy the geographer, the Belgæ are said to have occupied a district, including nearly the whole of Hampshire, Wiltshire, and Somersetshire, stretching across from the Hampshire coast to the shore of the Bristol Channel. The people of Sussex and Surrey were then called the Regni. "Rhegn" is "Cursed" in Cymric, as "Belg" is "a Ravager," to which Richards's Welsh Dictionary adds, "Belgiad, a ravager, a Belgian; Belgwys, the ravagers, the Belgæ." Celsus, quoted by Oudendorp, said that the Belgæ were indignant if they heard themselves called Gauls, and it appears also that they did not speak of themselves as Belgæ. But that name of Ravagers would naturally have been given to them by the Celtic tribes, whom, quitting the Rhine and conquering their way along the coast, they dislodged from the north-eastern shore of France, opposite Britain, and drove beyond the Seine or forced across the Channel.

It is usual to think Cæsar wrong in giving a German origin to the Belgæ, whom he places opposite to our south-eastern shores, on the coast east of the Seine, in part of Normandy, in Picardy, Flanders, and the modern Belgium and Holland. Yet Cæsar, shrewd and travelled, had personal knowledge of the difference he records between the people of the three divisions of Gaul, Belgic, Celtic, and Aquitanian. The Aquitanians bordered on Spain. Strabo says that in language, and appearance they resembled Spaniards rather than the other Gauls.<sup>1</sup> They appear, in fact, to have been Gaels, as the Iberian or Spanish Celts were. Only so could they differ in language from the Cymry of Celtic Gaul, as well as from the Belgæ, by whom some of the Cymry of the coast had been cast out of their possessions. That they did so differ is I think made certain when of the people of the three divisions Cæsar emphatically says that "these all differ in language, customs, and laws."<sup>2</sup> For, although Cymric and Gaelic are both Celtic languages, they are as much unlike each other as Danish and German. The relationship is manifest in their

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iv. 1-2.

<sup>2</sup> 'De Bello Gallico,' i. 1.

vocabularies, while the difference is marked not in the vocabularies only, but still more in the inflexions and distinctive characters.

I think Cæsar was right in this matter. There can be little doubt that the first Celts who came to Britain were the Gaels, and that they settled in Ireland and the <sup>The Gaels.</sup> West of England. Irish and Spanish histories and traditions agree in asserting that the Irish Gael came from Spain. The ancient History of Nennius distinctly states this. From Ireland the Gael crossed to the Western Islands and Highlands of Scotland; and he crossed also into Wales. Welsh scholars have at all times observed traces of a previous Gaelic occupation of their land. They were observed 150 years ago by Edward Lhuyd, and more recently demonstrated by the Rev. Basil Jones in his book on 'Vestiges of the Gael in Gwynedd' or North Wales. One vestige, for example, is the constant use by the Romans of Isca—"Isca Silurum," &c.—for river or water in the West of England, the word being the Gaelic uisge, which is not Cymric at all, and still survives in the Exe and Esk. Even the tradition of the common people in North Wales asserts that the original inhabitants were Gwythelians or Irish. The cromlechs are sometimes called Irish cots, and the foxes and polecats are said to be descended from the Irish dogs and cats.

Tacitus<sup>1</sup> says that the Silures, or people of Wales, and the Brigantes,<sup>2</sup> or people of the North of England (occupying Lancashire, Yorkshire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Northumberland), in his time resembled the people of Spain more than they did the other Gauls in language and appearance. The tribe on the opposite or eastern coast of Ireland were called also Brigantes, and the province of Galicia, in Spain, where the Gallieo dialect is said to contain many traces of Gaelic, has to this day the name of Brigantina. A glance at the map shows that Gaels, crossing the sea from Spain, would in fact strike most naturally upon Ireland and our western shore. Before the

<sup>1</sup> 'Vit. Agric.' ii.

<sup>2</sup> Brigantes and Silures seem to have been names adopted by the Romans from Cymric authority, those quiet in Wales being called men of the syl (pl. sylur) or soil, those in the North of England, who battled against the gradual process of expulsion, being known as Briganted, fighting thieves. Brigant is Welsh for thief and highlander.



coming of the Cymry these Gaels were thinly scattered over England between shore and shore. Their naming of places shows this. Thus, *pen*, or *penn*, means a head in Welsh, Cornish, and Breton; *cean*, *ceann*, means a head in Irish and Scotch—the *c* in all these languages being pronounced as *k*. Now, the early existence of the Gaelic form of *cean* for headland is traceable in the five great headlands of East Britain from Cantyre (*cean tir*, head of the land) to Kent, by the old names of tribes—Cantii, Icenii, Cantæ; Cantabriga (Cambridge), Canty Bay, and the Pentland Hills and Frith, where the Cymry, next in possession, have only half transformed to their own manner the name of Kentland. Some of the earlier Stone people in Spain, who may or may not be represented now by the Basques, perhaps came over with the Spanish Gaels; and such a people, of which we find the remains, were doubtless already existent also in this country. In connexion with this part of the subject it may be worth while to cite the apparent connexion between Mendip Hills and Grampians, and the Basque words *Mendia*, a hill, *Gara*, a height.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile the Cymric Celts, traced from Cimmerians and  
 The Cymry. Cimbri, once occupied midland Gaul and the coast opposite Britain. A people different in language, customs, and laws, chiefly Germanic, had come from the Rhine and had seized part of this Celtic coast, “expelling” the previous inhabitants. These new comers were called the Belgæ, which means, we find, in the language of the Cymry, ravagers. The expelled people may have been driven partly inland, where they could only possess goods by taking those of their countrymen and neighbours, or they crossed the sea to get possession of the thinly-peopled district of South-eastern Britain. From the south-east the Cymry spread, the Gaels yielding before them. But Belgæ, too, were tempted to the British shore, and had already a firm foot in Southern England when the Romans came to add another form of pressure.

The Gaelic aspect of the Silures in the time of Tacitus shows that the Gael had not yet been driven back from Wales to

<sup>1</sup> ‘Cumberland and Westmoreland, Ancient and Modern.’ By J. Sullivan. London, 1857.

Ireland. The Humber, as the Chumber, was a Cimbric river, Northumberland was called of old North Cumri-land, and in Cumberland the last stand of the northern Cymry, themselves driven from the plains, was made before they settled numerous in the fastnesses of Wales. They must have spread far along our eastern coast, for even the Aber in Aberdeen is Welsh, that name for the confluence of a small stream with a large being unknown in West Scotland. The Gaelic word is Inver, as in Inverness. The fens of Lincolnshire seem to have been retained also as a fastness into which the agricultural invader little cared to follow; and among the traces of Welsh ancestry in the fen-people was their long retention of that Celtic instrument, the bagpipe; "the drone of a Lincolnshire bagpipe" *as ever* *the* *bagpipe*; "the drone of a choly. If these arguments be sound, the admixture of Gaelic and Armorican or Breton, which closely resembles Welsh, would result from ancient intercourse between the Celts and Aquitanians of Gaul, where the Breton Celts were neighbours to the dislodged Cymry. In Ireland and the adjacent Western Islands and Highlands of Scotland Gaelic of Iberian origin remains; in the adjoining Wales only a few of the Gaels, who had original possession there, remained and united themselves with a portion of the Cymry by whom they were dislodged; but there was, nevertheless, union enough to establish, by admixture of vocabulary and of blood, a difference both in dialect and physical appearance between the inhabitants of North and South Wales. A Welshman and an Irishman speaking true Cymric and Gaelic cannot understand one another in the least, while there is Cymric enough in the Armorican for a Welshman to understand a Breton easily, and Gaelic enough for an Irishman to understand him, though with difficulty.<sup>1</sup> But the main fact that we

<sup>1</sup> The best original argument on this subject is to be found in two essays read, one to the Philological Society in, 1855, the other to the Ethnological Society in 1857, by the late James Kennedy, LL.B., and republished in his *Essays, Ethnological and Linguistic*. London and Leipzig, 1861. Mr. Thomas Wright, whose name must always be mentioned with honour in connexion with English antiquities, gives his valuable support to the still unpopular belief that Cæsar was right about the Belgæ (in 'The Celt, Roman, and Saxon,' Ed. 1861), and says that the arguments of Dr. Prichard and others to the contrary seem to him unsatisfactory.

secure by not accounting ourselves more exact in our theories than so shrewd and skilled a witness as Cæsar was, in evidence of what he saw and heard, is that the Belgæ in Gaul were but a tribe of the same people by whom the Frisian and Anglo-Saxon dialects of a common tongue were spoken, and that they had a firm hold in the south of Britain, even before Cæsar's time.

We find then in all these changes no series of sudden convulsions. By means of their small ships, slowly, and in course of years, the Spanish Gaels colonised Ireland and our western coasts. By more rapid invasion, probably, the Belgæ spread at a very remote time over the coasts opposite our south-eastern shores. The expelled Cymry must at first have crossed in large numbers, and cleared the south-east of England of the thinly-scattered Gael. Afterwards there was slow and steady migration, voluntary migration, probably, of Celts from the part of what is now called Normandy west of the Seine, and of some Bretons; voluntary migration certainly of the more thriving Belgæ, whom Cæsar found on the British shore people of one language with those he had left in Belgic Gaul. On English soil Gael yielded ground to Cymry, Cymry to Belg, and the Belg, we shall find, must have differed little, if at all, from the people who, as the stream of colonization and invasion still flowed in, were taken up by early chroniclers at a much later date in their history as Anglo-Saxons.

Meanwhile it was from the first the English people that was being formed. The quality of the bronze remains, the remains also of language and of literature, show that the Celts, whether Gael or Cymry, were no mere savages. They not only left the names given by them attached throughout the land to lakes, rivers, and mountains, but they perhaps contributed more than is now believed to the formation of English in its earliest stage. Such common words as gown, glove, basket,—though Martial did take the Britons for rude savages, when, to bring a word into discredit, he wrote “Barbara de pictis veni Bascauda Britannis,”—even probably such words as hat, coat, boots, iron, wood, leather, may be traced to Celtic originals. When such words are found without an etymology

First stage in  
the formation  
of  
English.

The Celtic  
element in  
English.

in Anglo-Saxon, but with an etymology in the language of the Cymry or the Gael, we may be sure that during those centuries of contact between Celt and Belg, or Anglo-Saxon, it found its way from the lips of the earlier to those of the later people. Thus hat is connected with the German Hut as a shelter for the head, but there is a Celtic verb *hatra*, to cover, and *het* means any sort of head covering, whether a hat or a garland. It is this Celtic element in English that I have indicated in the Pedigree by a faint dotted line of connexion through which Celtic passes into Anglo-Saxon.

The following list illustrates the Celtic origin of English local names. C is attached to Cymric, G to Gaelic C is little in local names

- Aber (C.), Inver (G.), confluence of small and large stream, river mouth, as Aberdeen, formerly Aber-don, near mouth of Don, Aber-gavenny, at confluence of the Usk and the Gavenny.
- Ach (G.), a field, as Achinver, the Troasachs.
- Airgyl (G.), Air-Gudhel, the frontier of the Gael.
- Ard, high, lofty, Aidmillan.
- Avon (C.), Avon, a river. There is an Avon at Bristol, another in Northamptonshire, another in Warwickshire. Ptolemy called the Humber *Aßporpos*, which is Avon Tros, (over, exceeding,) an augmentative applied to the broad estuary.
- Baile (G.), a town, as Ballyshannon, town on Shannon.
- Bala (C.), flow of a river into a lake.
- Bann (C.), high, as Banfor, the high Cor, Choir, or Christian College. There are hills so named in Brecknockshire, Caernarthen, and Glamorgan. Bansdown near Bath, Pan Down by Newport, I. W.
- Beinn, Ben (G.), a mountain, or pinnacle: Ben-Nevis (L.), Nivis, of snow, or contraction of G. neam-bathais, cloud-blowed.
- Caer (C.), walls of defence, castle, city: Caernarthen, city of Merlin, Caernvion, the stronghold in At Von, opposite Mona (or Von).
- Carm (C.), crooked, "the crooked Carm."
- Carm (C.), a head, Carmine, a headland Kent, Cantyre.
- Cill (C.), Kil, a hermit-cell, place of worship, burying-ground Kilkenny, Church of St. Kenny, or Canice.
- Craig (C.), Craig (C.), cruck, a rock, or castle on a rock: Cruckfergus, Castle of Fergus.
- Clyd (C.), a common river name in Wales, from clyd, wum, sheltered. The Clyde in Scotland was named by the Cymry.
- Cod (C.), a wood, cote, in Northcote, Southcote.
- Cwm (C.), a dale, whence A.-S. comb, Wycomb, watered dale, from (C)wy, or Wy, water Compton, cwm dun, or A.-S. ton, dale town.
- Din (C.), a fortified hill, Dinas, a city; the Roman dunum, duum in Londinum, Lugdunum, &c. Dunadh (G.) is shutting, closing; hence some wrongly derive the A.-S. ton and English town, and, in sense of hill, sand-dunes and downs.
- Dubh (G.), Black: Dublin, Dubh Lanne, Black Pool.

- Dun (G.), a fortified hill, or town. | Maen (C.), a stone; Pen-maen-mawr, headland of the great stone.
- Dwr (C.), Water: Derwent, Dwr and gwen, fair, or gwent, a fair open region; Dart, Adour, Adur, Calder, Stour (Es Dwr). Elsewhere, the Douro, &c.
- Gwy, or Wy (C.), Water, Rivers Wye, Edwy, Llugwy, &c.
- Gwysg (C.), Uisge (G.), Isca, a stream; Ax, Esk, Ex, Ouse, Usk, Ouse, Wisbeach (Ouse-beach), Osborn (Ouse-bourn).
- Llan (C.), an enclosure, churchyard, church: Lampeter, Llan Bedr, church of Peter; Llandaff, church of David; Llanberis, church of St. Peris; Llangollen, church of St. Collen.
- Lyn (C.), a lake or pool: Lynn, in Norfolk, the Pool; London, Lyn dun, the Town of the Pool, the Pool of the river formerly overflowing the lowlands of the marshes.
- Pen (C.), a head, summit, not confined, like (G.) Ceann, to sea promontories: Pendarves, head of the oakfield; Penzance, the Holy Headland.
- Rhos (C.), a mountain meadow, a moist large plain: Ross.
- Tamh (G.), rest, quiet; Thama, quiet river; Thames, Tamh uisge, quiet water.
- Tref and Tre (C.), a town or home: Tredgar; Coventry, town of the Convent.
- Trent (C.), from Dirwyn, to wind round.
- Tyne (G.), from Tuinn, waves, or Tuinna, water's edge.

That the Celtic element in common English speech is much larger than has been fairly recognized, nobody has shown so well as the late Mr. Garnett in his essay, read before the Philological Society, upon the languages and dialects of Britain. It was the purpose of that essay to show generally how fruitful would be the application of sound Celtic scholarship to a study of the Western languages of Europe. Mr. Garnett offered only suggestions pointing towards knowledge yet to be acquired; but, in illustrating his case with analogies between English and Cymric, he cited a profusion of words that were, he said, but a twentieth part of those which might be quoted. Here, for example, are some English words of Celtic origin relating to the arts of life:—

The Celtic  
element in  
common  
English.

basgawd .. .. .	basket.	ceubal, boat .. ..	coble.
berfa .. .. .	barrow.	clwt, patch .. ..	clout.
botwm .. .. .	button.	cnaf, button .. ..	} knob.
brân (skin of wheat) ..	bran.	cnwbb, knob .. ..	
brodiaw, to darn, em-	prod or point.	crochan, a pot .. ..	crook.
broider.		crog, a hook .. ..	crook.
bwyell, hatchet .. ..	bill.	crwt .. .. .	crust.
cab, caban, hut .. ..	cabin.		Fr. (croûte).
cae, enclosure .. ..	quay.	cwch, boat .. ..	cock-boat.

cwysed (fr. cwys ridge, gusset.  
furrow).

cyl, cyn .. .. kiln.

darn, a patch .. .. darn.

deintur, frame for .. ..  
stretching cloth.

fflain, cattle lancet .. fleam.

fflasged, large wicker .. flasket.  
vessel.

fflaw, shiver, splinter .. flaw.

ffris, nap of cloth .. frieze.

ffynel, air-hole, chimney funnel.

gardas (gar, shank, das, garter.  
tie).

gefyn, fetter .. .. gyve.

greidell, iron baking- .. griddle.  
plate.

grual .. .. .. gruel.

gwain, a carriage .. wain.

gwall, rampart .. .. wall.

gwald, hem, border .. welt.

gwib, sudden course .. quip.

gwibl, a turn, quirk .. quibble.

gwiced, little door .. wicket.

gwlanen (from gwlan, flannel.  
wool). Heref. flannen.

gwlyb, liquor .. .. flip.

gwn, robe .. .. .. gown.

gwyfr .. .. .. wire.

hem, a border .. .. hem.

hob, measure .. .. hoop.

(quarter peck,  
N. Yorkshire.)

hws, a covering, hwsan, housing.  
hood.

lath, rod .. .. .. lath.

llogel, drawer, partition locker.

llymry, jelly of oatmeal flummery.

masg, stitch in netting mesh.

matog .. .. .. mattock.

mop, mopa .. .. .. mop.

paol .. .. .. pail.

pan, cup, bowl .. .. pan.

parc, field, enclosure .. park.

peg, peged, a measure .. peck.

peled, little ball .. .. pellet.

pieyn, a small hooped .. piggin or  
vessel. .. biggin.

piser (Breton picher), a .. pitcher.  
jug.

potes, a cooked mess .. pottage.

rhail, a fence, mound .. rail.

rhasg, a slice .. .. rasher.

rhic, rhig, a notch, .. ridge.  
groove.

rhill, a row .. .. .. drill.

rhim, raised edge .. rim.

rhuwch, rough garment rug.

sawdurian, to cement .. solder.

syth, stiffening, glue .. size.

tael, instrument, tool .. tackle.

tasel, fringe, tuft .. tassal.

teddu, to spread .. .. ted (to spread  
hay). }

tincerdd, tail-trade or .. tinker.  
lowest of crafts.

torth, loaf (Breton tart.

tartez, cake).

tres, chain or strap for .. trace.  
drawing.

trul, a loter .. .. drill.

It may be that in some of these cases, and in some of those next quoted, a word has come out of English into Celtic, or has passed into English and into Celtic from a separate and common source. But many of the words have a rational etymology in Celtic and in Celtic only; and as to others, there is the liveliest appearance of the passage of a Celtic word into vernacular English by an old familiarity of intercourse between the Celtic and Germanic tribes settled in England. In the northern provincial dialects there is, as we should expect to find, rather more Celtic than in literary English, and in the familiarly expressive but undignified vernacular the Celtic element is

strongly marked. Thus, "bother" is good Celtic, and stands in all seriousness for tribulation in the Irish Scripture. The following analogies are among those drawn promiscuously by Mr. Garnett from the Cymric only:—

asbri, trick, mischief ..	spre.	gweddu, to yoke, marry ..	wed.
baldorddus, prating ..	balderdash.	gwicawr, a pedlar ..	hawker.
bamein (Breton, to ..	bam.	gwichiaw, to cry sharply ..	squeak.
bewitch, cheat).		gwyal, mesh .. ..	goal.
bicru, to wrangle ..	bicker.	gwyllaw, to weep ..	wail.
blew, hair of animals ..	flue (of fur).	hebog .. ..	hawk.
bwg, hobgoblin .. ..	bug, bugbear.	hecian, to halt .. ..	hitch.
bygylu, to threaten ..	bully.	herlawd, a youth ..	harlot.
carawl, love song ..	carol.		(in Old English a man servant.)
cefn, back .. ..	chine.	hochi, to expectorate ..	hawk.
cic, foot, cician, to ..	kick.	hocden, a flirt .. ..	hoyden.
strike with the foot.		hweh, a swine .. ..	hog.
cnoc, a rap .. ..	knock.	llachiaw, a cudgel ..	lick.
cnòl, round summit ..	knoll.	llawd, youth .. ..	lad.
cnul, passing bell ..	knell.	lloes, girl .. ..	lass.
coeru, to indulge ..	cocker.	lleder (lled, broad, flat)	leather.
cogel, short staff .. ..	cudgel.	llug, partial .. ..	} lukewarm.
crimpiaw, to raise in ..	crimp.	lluglwy, tepid .. ..	
ridges.		llumon, chimney ..	lun.
cris, crust, crisblu, ..	crisp.	madredd, pus .. ..	matter.
crumbling.		mwygl, tepid, sultry ..	muggy.
crwth, fiddle .. ..	crowd.	nugiaw, to shake .. ..	nudge.
crwcan, to bend .. ..	crouch.	paneg, entrails .. ..	paunch.
cwrian, to squat .. ..	crouch.	piciaw, to throw .. ..	pitch.
cwta, short .. ..	cutty	pinc, smart, gay .. ..	pink
(pipe, &c.)			(to adorn).
cwll, separation .. ..	cull.	posiaw, to interrogate, ..	pose.
chwant, desire .. ..	want.	embarrass.	
chwap, smart stroke ..	whop.	priawd, possessed, ..	bride.
chwedlena, to prate, ..	twaddle.	spouse.	
gossip.		pwmp, round mass ..	pimple.
dwn, dusky .. ..	dun.	souba, to dip .. ..	sop, soup.
esmwyth, even, soft ..	smooth.	soegi, to steep .. ..	soak.
filowg (skittish) a ..	filly.	tal, lofty .. ..	tall.
young mare.		tariaw, to loiter .. ..	tarry.
fug, deception .. ..	fudge.	tociaw, to cut short ..	dock.
fwrw, down .. ..	fur.	tosiaw, to jerk, throw ..	toss.
glyn, valley .. ..	glen.	tripiaw, to stumble ..	trip.
grymialu, to murmur ..	grumble.	troddi, to move forward	trudge.

There is a Cymric intensive prefix *ys*, yielding such analogies as these:—

Garm, cry, *ys-garmes*, conflict: skirmish. Cin, skin, *ys-gin*, fur robe: skin. Crafu, scratch, *ys-crafu*: scrape. Crech, cry, *ys-crech*, *ys-crech* .. ..

motion, ys-cudaw, to move hastily : scud. Llac, lax, ys-lac : slack. Llaif, cutting off, ys-leifw, slice : slice, sliver, Prov. Mal, light, ys-mal : small. Mwg, smoke, ys-mucach, puff of smoke : smoke. Par, spear, ys-par : spear. Pig, point, ys-pig : spike. Gwain, service, ys-wain, esquire : swain.

The following are some of the many analogies between English and Scotch Gaelic :—

Tuig (understand), twig ; steud, steed ; maracadh, market ; bata, boat ; streng, string ; bocsa, box ; sron (nose), snore, snort ; bog (soft), bog ; ransaich, ransack ; sliom (smooth), slime.

Such Celtic words as clan, tartan, plaid, kilt, and reel are clearly among those of later introduction ; and some others— not only those formally recorded, as Druid and bard, but those incorporated in other Western languages as in our own, —may have found their way to us from Latin or from Norman French in secondary form. There remains, however, a Celtic element in English that indicates long habit of familiar contact in ancient time. There are more words than would have been taken in the course of conflict ; and the sort of words do not belong to the language that men learn from enemies.

Thus for about four hundred years from the surrender of Caractacus, A.D. 51, the Romans maintained military possession of England, and in all that time they set no mark of theirs upon the language of its people. For we can hardly account as a mark on language the inevitable attachment to the soil of four or five military words indicative of their camps (castra, in Chester, Manchester) ; their colonies (as in Lincoln) ; their military roads, levelled and strewn ways, strata, streets ; their harbours or ports ; and perhaps their ramparts, since from the Roman vallum, a rampart, some derive the Celtic baile, whence we get the modern English bail or Bailey, and the Irish Bally prefixed to some names of towns. This is all the Latin of the Conquest to be found in English. Of a really civilizing intercourse evidence would have passed into the language, but there was none. What influence the Roman occupation had was, I am inclined to believe, adverse to the real advancement of the country.

Faint traces  
of the Roman  
occupation.  
Latin of the  
First Period.

The few words of Latin origin just named are said technically



to belong in English to the Latin of the First Period: those introduced afterwards, chiefly by Augustine and his successors, among the English whom Rome Christianised, being accounted Latin of the Second; those that were brought by the Normans, Latin of the Third; and lastly, those introduced for technical and scientific use, since what is called the Revival of Letters, Latin of the Fourth Period. Of these Periods, the first, second, and third contributed—the first, as we have seen, in almost no degree; the second, as we shall find, appreciably; and the third much, to the formation of the language.

We turn now from these earliest traces of our language to the first beginnings of our literature. We hear of them, but do not find them, in a cosmogony and a large body of religious traditions, running through many verses that it was forbidden to commit to writing, but that were being handed down to men of their own order by the Druids before Cæsar's time. There were said to be so many verses that a man might spend, and sometimes did spend, twenty years of his life in learning them. Of the wisdom and splendour of the Druids wonderful things have been fabled by the later descendants of the Cymry, but in the single trustworthy account left us by Cæsar we find only the familiar sketch of a priestly class that in a rude age rises to influence by sharing, multiplying, and using to its own gain the reverent instinctive sense of unseen powers that belongs to the crude manhood of the heathen. The commonalty of Gaul, we learn from Julius Cæsar, was almost in the condition of slaves, power being in the hands of priests and warrior-chiefs. The priests, called Druids, judged and punished crimes, excommunicating those by whom their sentences were disregarded, and this excommunication was much dreaded by the superstitious people. The priests also controlled the education of the young. There was a fixed place for an annual assembly, to which quarrels were brought for settlement. There was a Chief Druid, who held office for life by election; sometimes, however, in case of vacancy, the priestly candidates fought one another for supremacy. But they were militant only as a Church, and were

Twilight  
before the  
Dawn of  
English  
Literature.  
Druids.

exempt from all military service and from all payment of tribute. They had, in fact, says Cæsar, "a dispensation in all matters." This institution was supposed to have been devised in Britain, because many of those young men who were tempted by its privileges to join the priestly class went into Britain for a more accurate study of its system. Their study consisted in the learning by rote of a great number of verses, which were handed down by oral tradition, and which it was not permitted to commit to writing. What they did write on public or private matters they wrote in Greek letters for the sake of mystery. Their traditional verse taught a cosmogony, and that there was a future life for man by transmigration of his soul out of one body into another. The gods worshipped by this priesthood Cæsar identifies with his own as Mercury, Apollo, Mars, Jupiter, and Minerva. But he tells us that their worshippers propitiated these gods with human sacrifices, using innocent persons when there were no thieves or other criminals on hand. Some of the Gauls, it is added, had "figures of vast size; the limbs of which, formed of osiers, they fill with living men, which being set on fire, the men perish in the flames." But Cæsar does not say that they had these in Britain. The Druids, he tells us, all agreed that these people were descended from the God of Hell. "For that reason they compute the division of every season, not by the number of days, but by nights; and they keep birthdays and the beginnings of months and years in such an order that the day follows the night." And so, indeed, we still speak of a se'nnight or a fortnight. Of the producers of our earliest literature, what else is to be learnt we gather only from the student of the ancient records of the Gael. The dawn of thought was represented by a search for God; but in a remote age there was in this country a lettered class, apparently distinct from that of the priests, producing a rude history and poetry for a quick-witted and imaginative people.

We are of sundry races, but one people, within bounds of what the world calls England, and a fair sketch of our literature must needs tell how there were from the beginning wits at work in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, as well as in England east of the Severn and south of the Tweed. The genius of a great nation

is our topic, and it is no topic to be discussed in a provincial spirit.

The story of our literature begins with the Gael ; for there is preserved in Ireland a great mass of ancient copies of more ancient writings that reproduce most curious and interesting traces of historic tale and song in the remotest epoch of our common history. Let us at once dismiss here, as beside our purpose, the name of Erse, derived from Erin or Ierne, to distinguish Irish from Scotch Gaelic. The distinction of existing dialects does not affect the story of their ancient common literature. They were Gaedhels or Gaels, speaking Gaedhlic or Gaelic, who coming most probably from Spain landed in Ireland and upon the western coasts of England and Scotland, who also, as they spread themselves abroad over the new soil, crossed the narrow strait of sixteen miles dividing Ireland from Cantyre to settle also in the western islands and highlands of Scotland. Many of the Gaedhels who reached Scotland partly by land, instead of wholly by sea, no doubt sojourned awhile in Ireland on their way ; and in that sense most of the Scotch Gaels are said to have passed over from Ireland before the third century. But the old poems and traditions show that there was continual communication, flux and reflux, between the Gaelic chiefs in Ireland and the chiefs of Alban, the Scotch mainland, or the intervening islands. Erin, as the greater and more fertile possession, doubtless contained the richest chiefs ; in Erin, therefore, would be the head-quarters of song and story, and this island was also the larger stage upon which the more stirring political dramas could be enacted. Where the priests and men of letters could most readily grow fat, and where there was a court that represented the best strength of Gaelic civilization, we should expect to find, as we do, the great mass of remaining Gaelic records. But in the beginning of our literature there was no real separation between Irish and Scotch Gael, and we dismiss, therefore, as most unprofitable, all debate as to the ancient right of Scotch or Irishman to an exclusive proprietorship in any ancient worthy,—to the poet Oisín, for example, of whom Scotch and Irish Gael have to this day retained equivalent traditions. Here too, then, let us avoid provincialism, and simply record the

Ancient  
Literature of  
the Gaels in  
Britain.

one race, irrespective of obscure varieties of tribe, the entire body of the ancient Gaedhel.<sup>1</sup>

The first writing in this country of which there is record was by the Oghuim characters, still to be seen on stone monu-<sup>The Oghuim.</sup>ments and in some ancient books. The word, in modern Irish, stands for the occult sciences; and, according to Lucian, Oghum was painted in the second century as a Herculean Mercury, old, in a lion's skin, with a club in his right hand and a bent bow in his left; the ears of his worshippers bound by a chain of gold and amber to his tongue. These Oghuim letters were cut with a knife on the staves or wands of the poet. A copy of an ancient poem, in a manuscript itself 850 years old,<sup>2</sup> speaks more than once of an Oghuim cut in hoops or wands and placed in the path of Queen Meav and her army. As each staff was found, it was carried to the Queen, who sent it to the great champion Fergus, and by him it was read. Again, the Book of Leinster, which contains copies made early in the twelfth century of ancient records then existing, contains a poem by the second daughter of King Cormac McArt, who lived in the third century, setting forth a tradition to account for the agglutination of two ancient Oghuim tablets. This is a tradition to which reference is made in other of the most ancient Gaelic poems.

*The Tale of the fate of Bailé, the sweet-spoken, and the Princess Aillin of Leinster.*

Their loves being crossed and themselves parted, this faithful pair set out to meet each other privately on the banks of Boyne. Bailé rested upon his way at Traighm Bailé, now Dundalk. Here he and his people had unyoked their chariots, sent their horses out to graze, and turned themselves to pleasure, when they saw a horrible man like a spectre coming towards them along the shore from the south, swiftly as a hawk darts from a cliff or as the wind rushes from off the sea. "Let him be

<sup>1</sup> This doctrine is effectively sustained by Mr. J. F. Campbell, in the fourth volume of his 'Popular Tales of the West Highlands, Orally Collected.' Edinburgh, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> The Leabhar na-h-Uidre, quoted in the Second Appendix to the late Professor Eugene O'Curry's 'Lectures on the MS. Materials of Ancient Irish History.' Dublin, 1861. Professor O'Curry had unequalled knowledge of the contents of the Old Gaelic MSS. in Ireland, and, where no other authority is named, the information on this subject given in the text is founded upon his researches.

met," said Bailé, "to ask whither he goes, whence he comes, and why his haste." He came from Mount Leinster, the man said, and went north. He had no news but that Aillin as she was coming to meet Bailé had been overtaken by the youths of Leinster, and was dead of the hindrance, as it was foretold by Druids that this couple would not meet in life, but would meet after death, and would not part for ever after that. The man then passed by as a blast of wind. When Bailé heard his tidings he fell dead, and Bailé's tombstone was set up, and a yew grew up through his grave, and the form of Bailé's head appeared on the top of it. Then the same man sped south, and passed into the sunny chamber of Aillin, and told her how he had seen the lamentation over Bailé, who died while coming to meet a favourite and beloved woman. When he had told his evil news he darted out, and Aillin fell dead, and her tombstone was set up, and an apple-tree grew through her grave and became a great tree at the end of seven years, and the form of Aillin's head appeared on the top of it. At the end of seven years, poets, and prophets, and visioners cut down the yew which was over the grave of Bailé, and they made a Poet's Tablet of it, and they wrote the visions, and the espousals, and the loves, and the courtships of Ulster in it. The apple-tree which grew over Aillin was also cut down, and in the same way the courtships of Leinster were written in it. Long afterwards, when, on November eve, Art, the son of Conn, made festival, the poets and the professors of every art came to that feast as it was their custom, and they brought their tablets with them. And those Tablets also came there; and Art saw them, and when he saw them he asked for them; and the two tablets were brought, and he held them in his hands face to face. Suddenly the one tablet of them sprang upon the other, and they became united as is woodbine round a twig, so that it was not possible to separate them. And they were preserved in the Treasury at Tara, until it was burnt by Dunlang, the son of Enna, at the time he burnt the Princesses.

Another story, ascribed to the year one, tells how Cuchullain, seeking three persons who had mysteriously disappeared, was helped by a prince who inscribed an Oghuim in his spear. Then he went out upon the sea, and his charm carried him straight to the island where the men he sought had been detained. Again, in a story of which the action belongs to about the year 400, a king's son of Munster, obliged to fly to the court of Feradach, King of Scotland, doubtful of his reception when there, hid in a grove near Feradach's palace, where he was recognized by the king's poet, who, having learned his history, observes an Oghuim inscription in his shield. "Who was it that befriended you with the Oghuim which is in your shield?" said the poet. "It was not good luck he designed for you." "What does it contain?" asked the king's son from Munster. "What it contains," said the poet, "is, that if you came by day to Feradach's

court, your head should be cut off before evening; and that if it were by night you came, your head should be cut off before morning." When a king's son could travel, or be supposed to travel, with an open letter like that fastened to his arm, the mystery of writing might well be associated with enchantments, and be used to magnify the power of the poet or the priest.

These were the days when poetry was first written in staves, that is to say, cut on the four sides of a square staff, or in the folds of a thick staff opening fanwise. In Poets' Staves. the ancient Irish or Brehon laws, an article that belongs to Christian times prescribing the sort of weapon persons of each rank might carry for their defence against dogs, &c., in their usual walks, allows a slender lath or graceful crook to a priest, but assigns to a poet his tablet-staff according to the privileges of his order. Poetry was then really a staff to lean upon, and an irate bard might literally break a critic's head with a quatrain.

The primitive classification of literary men among the Gaels according to their capabilities was into the Ollamh, or perfect Doctor, who was qualified to recite at public Old Gaelic  
degrees in  
Literature. feasts and assemblies seven fifties of historic tales; the Anroth, who could tell half as many; the Cli, who could tell a third of the number; the Cano; and so on down to the Fochlog, who told thirty; and the lowest class of literary men, the Driseg, who could relate but twenty. In the infancy of civilization men are as children, incapable of giving their attention to a narrative that does not appeal to curiosity and wonder. But the stories of the Gaelic man of letters must be stories of the right sort, told in the right words. When the visible power of the written word was but as that of the first green sprout from an acorn, much of intellectual care was bestowed necessarily upon the securing of the utmost accuracy of tradition. Of the seven times fifty tales that the Ollamh had at his tongue's end for the instruction or amusement of a king, five times fifty must be Prime Stories—those worth preserving—and twice fifty, Secondary Stories; while the Secondary Stories were permitted only to men of the four first grades. This we read in a MS. copied into the ancient Book of Leinster, where it is added that "these Prime Stories are: Destructions and Preyings,

Courtships, Battles, Caves, Navigations, Tragedies (or Deaths), Expeditions, Elopements, and Conflagrations. These following also reckon as Prime Stories: stories of Irruptions, of Visions, of Loves, of Hostages, and of Migrations."

This characteristic list shows in what literary themes a rude people delighted. There was History as well as Poetry among our early Celtic literature, but the History was tinged by fancy, and the Poetry was in celebration of historic incident. We have an example of the manner of our first historians in the following "Prime Story" of a Battle in Erin, told in a tract fourteen hundred years old, of which there is one ancient copy in existence. It tells—

Of History  
among the  
ancient  
Gael.

*Of a Battle fought on the Plain of Moytura.*

The plain is still covered with cromlechs, and if the story be true in its dates, those cromlechs were raised over the slain about three thousand eight hundred years ago.

Less than two hundred and fifty years before the coming of the Milesians, the Firbolgs reached Erin. Landing at different points, they contrived to meet in the unpeopled land, and fixed their seat of government upon the green hill now called Tara. The five brothers divided the island into five parts, and ruled in peace for six and thirty years, but at the end of that time they were surprised to find that there was another people in the land, the Tuatha dé Danann, of whom they had known nothing. These people after landing on the north-east coast of Erin had destroyed their boats, slipped into fastnesses in Leitrim, and so gradually showed themselves to the Firbolg people, pretending that they had come through the air by skill in necromancy. The King of the Firbolgs sent a great warrior, named Sreng, to observe the strangers, who seeing his approach sent forth a champion of their own, named Breas, to meet him. The two champions approached cautiously, peeping at each other over their shields; Breas spoke first, and Sreng was delighted to hear himself addressed in Gaedhlic. Then they conversed and found that the two nations were of one descent, the ancestors of the Tuatha dé Danann having passed into the north of Europe, when their brothers the ancestors of the Firbolgs went of old into Thrace. The heroes compared arms, exchanged spears for comparison of arms on either side, counselling division of the island, and mutual friendship between the two peoples. But when Sreng returned to the Firbolg King, that king and his people were bent upon giving battle. The Tuatha dé Danann, expecting attack, withdrew to Magh Tuireadh (or Moytura, near the present village of Cong in Mayo). The Firbolgs marched upon them. The Tuatha dé Danann offered through their bards terms of accommodation. But the Firbolgs were resolved to fight, did fight, and were defeated with great slaughter, their numbers being brought down to three hundred after four days' battle. Sreng cut off the left arm of the King of

the Tuads of the Danes. But the King of the Tuads had a silver arm made to replace it, and was called in story afterwards the Silver-handed. Sreng, who survived with the three hundred, still fought on, and offered to complete the battle by a series of single combats. But the Tuatha dé Danann offered him peace, and gave him one of the five divisions of the land to rule over, so that Connaught became known as Sreng's Province.

Of this most ancient piece of British history, Professor O'Curry says, "I am bound to assert that I believe there is not in all Europe a tract of equal historical value yet lying in MS., considering its undoubted antiquity and authenticity."

One step more we will take in company with the most primitive of our historians.

Ancient manuscripts that contain extracts from the lost book of Drom Sneachta, written before St. Patrick's time, represent from that venerable authority what was the Prime Story of Irruption and Migration that accounted for—

*The first appearance of the Guedhels in Erin.*

Before their time the Firbolgs and the Tuatha dé Danann occupied the country, and these were originally of one race with the Guedhels in Scythia. A branch of them went to Egypt, afterwards returned to Scythia, then went to Greece, and lastly to Spain, where after a long residence they built the city of Bragantia. (Observe the perfect coincidence of this tradition with what we elsewhere learn of the Brigantes in Spain, Ireland, and England.) At last a colony of them came into Erin (about 1700 B.C.), under command of the eight sons of Galamh, who is commonly called Milesias. These Milesians landed at the mouth of the Slaney, in Wexford, unobserved by the Tuatha dé Danann, and at once marched upon Tara the seat of government, where they called upon the three kings of the island to surrender. They replied that they were taken by surprise, and proposed to the invaders to re-embark, go out to sea a distance of nine waves, and then, if they could forcibly make good their landing, they should have the country. The Milesians agreed that this was fair, and went back to their ships; but the Tuatha dé Danann thereupon raised a fierce magical tempest which dispersed their fleet. The Milesians, however, had also Druids, and although five of the eight brothers were drowned, three landed, namely, Eremon, Eber Finn, and Amergen of the White Knee, the poet, chronicler, and judge, and Amergen was the first man who dispensed justice in Erin. After the landing two battles were fought and won, although in the first the Milesian brothers lost their mother Secta. The power of the Tuatha dé Danann having been thus overthrown, Eremon and Eber Finn divided the land between them. But they themselves quarrelled and fought. Afterwards Eremon was sole king, and in his reign the Cruithneans or Picts



came into Erin and passed over to Alban or Scotland, where they settled.

This is the native record or tradition that corroborates the argument derived from other sources for the coming of the Gaedhels into Erin out of Spain.

Fights, courtship, and abduction; occupation of the riches of a thinly-peopled or unpeopled soil; combat whenever two different bodies of colonists chanced to be coveting the same broad lands, are the chief features of old Gaelic history. It represents in its details a somewhat restless pastoral people, apt to diffuse itself by great and small migrations, fierce and persistent in fight, but not cruel, and giving honour to a very chivalrous sense of fair play. There are few tales of mean espial and betrayal. More natural to the Gael was his notion that the invaders who had made good their landing unexpected, unopposed, might reasonably, at the request of the invaded people, re-embark, retire nine waves, and then let it appear whether in fair fight they could make their landing good. The half-barbarous Gael—Pagan, but a gentleman in the rough—who to the best of his own way and time held women in honour, and was often gladly subject to a clever queen, delighted in rich colour (not in Macphersonian gloom), and had the taste for ornament that we find clearly displayed in the gold trinkets and the chased work of the Bronze period discovered in its tombs. He liked the joyous festival, the glad run with the hounds. He had also a religious spirit and a lively fancy, that accorded dignity to the office not of the priest only but of the man of letters. The young Gaelic civilization showed, even in its vanities, its follies, its misdeeds, a clever childishness that might advance into maturer dignity and worth. There are no signs of the unmanly apathy, the base animal cunning or ferocity, that indicate a stagnant barbarism. But barbarism undoubtedly there was. The Ulstermen were said to mix the brains of their slain enemies with lime, form them into hard balls, and play with them when boastfully comparing trophies. Conchobar is said to have had his own skull penetrated by such a brainstone, and to have lived seven years with two brains in his head, always sitting, for he would die were he to shake himself.

### A separate piece of ancient Gaelic history records

#### *The Origin of the Boromean Tribute,*

so called from the number of cows paid in it—bo, being the Gaelic for a cow. The legend is of a King of Leinster, who married the younger daughter of the chief Sovereign at Tara, but was afterwards persuaded by his people that he ought to have been married to the elder. He confined his young queen in a secret chamber, gave out that she was dead, and as a widower obtained her sister's hand in marriage. Though he had flinched from murder, he committed bigamy. But the concealed sister, having escaped, one day appeared suddenly before her husband and his new wife. The deceived second wife died on the spot, of shame and horror. The first wife returned to her solitary chamber, and died of a broken heart. Their father, who heard of the tragedy, marched into Leinster, and compelled the King of Leinster and his people to bind themselves and their descendants for ever to pay every three years a tribute of 5000 fat cows, 5000 hogs, 5000 fat wethers, 5000 clocks, 5000 ounces of silver, and 5000 large vessels of bronze.

This penalty was evidently associated with the habits of a people living by flocks and herds, and having among themselves weavers and workers in metal. But there is no mention here of iron or metallic coin. Pecus still represents Pecunia. Of this Boromean or cow tribute—which is said to have been levied until the year 680, then abolished, and revived at the beginning of the eleventh century by Brian the son of Cinneidigh, as a punishment for Leinster's service to the Danes—it may be here added that for reviving it Brian obtained the name, yet famous in nursery lore, of Brian Boróimhé.

The fancy of the narrator always played over the surface of an old historic tale, giving it stronger hold through curiosity and wonder on the general attention, and, through that, upon the memory of all. Sometimes the whole history was so completely interpenetrated by the workings of imagination that it became a myth. The most famous of such myths is the record of the Tain Bo Chuailgné (Cattle-spoil of Chuailgné, a place now called Cooley, in the county Louth), through which we will pass to a consideration of old Gaelic poetry. The tale was contained in the most ancient of the lost books of the Gael, Cuilmenn or Great Book of Skins, and it is referred to in the history of Leinster. It was included in a MS. of the eleventh century, now lost, but described little more than half a page among the Gaelic MSS. in the possession of the H

Society. There are venerable legends that relate the early loss of the whole story of the Tain and its recovery ; but the numerous accessible copies of the tale itself are comparatively modern. About the year 580, Senchan (pronounced Shencan), who was the chief poet, called a meeting of the poets and learned men of Erin to ascertain whether any of them remembered the old tale of the Cattle-spoil of Chuailgné, which took place about the year 39. They said that they remembered only fragments of it ; whereupon Senchan asked whether any of his pupils would go into the country Letha (Italy), to learn the tale which a learned man had taken to the East after the Cuilmenn had been carried away. The legend goes on to tell how some of those who went had proceeded no further than Connaught, when at the cromlech of Fergus Mac Róigh, the ghost of Fergus appeared in a beautiful form. It had brown hair, and wore a collared gold-ribbed shirt, a green mantle, a gold-hilted sword, and sandals of bronze. From the ghost's dictation Saint Ciaran then wrote in its true form the Tain Bo Chuailgné, of which, as a most lively record of old Gaelic civilization, I will tell briefly the substance. What the 'Argonautic Expedition,' or the 'Seven against Thebes,' is to Grecian history, such, thought Professor O'Curry, is to Irish history—

*The Tale of the Cattle-spoil of Chuailgné.*

Meáv (written Meadhbh) was the daughter of that Eochaidh, King of Erin, who fought his three revolted sons, and after their defeat and death was revolted against by the men of Connaught. To keep them in order, Eochaidh made his daughter Meáv Queen of Connaught, and he gave her the powerful Connaught Chief Ailill, for husband. Meáv had before then quitted Conor, King of Ulster, to whom she had been married unhappily. Ailill died, and the widowed Queen went to the Court of Leinster, there to choose for herself a third husband. Having chosen the King of Leinster's youngest son, who was named also Ailill, she married him, and brought him back as her king-consort. Many children were born of their happy marriage.

One day Queen Meáv and her husband argued with each other as to their wealth, which was the richer ; for at that time all women had their private goods, which was their dowry ; and they resolved to produce what they had secured to them in marriage. So they brought to the king their treasures against each other. There were brought to them and their wooden and metal vessels, and they were found to be equal in value. Their finger-rings, clasps, bracelets, thumb-rings, diadems, and always of gold, and they also were equal. There were brought to them ornaments of crimson, and blue, and black, and green, and yellow,

and mottled, and white, and streaked, in wealth of these, too, they were equal. There were brought their flocks of sheep; their steeds and their studs from pastures; great herds of swine from forests, and deep glens, and solitudes; and droves of cows from the forests and most remote solitudes of the province. Still all were equal, but there was found among Ailill's herds a young bull calved by one of Meáv's cows, which, not deeming it honourable to be under woman's control, had gone over and attached himself to Ailill's herds.

The name of this fine animal was the White-horned, and it was found that the Queen had not one to match him.

She sent, therefore, for her cousin, MacRoth, and asked where, in the five provinces of Erin, she could find a bull to match the White-horned? MacRoth knew of a better bull, called the Brown Bull of Chuailgné. It belonged to Daré, son of Fachtna, of Chuailgné, in Ulster.

"Go," said the Queen, "ask Daré to lend it me for a year, and I will send him fifty heifers back with it. If the people of his district object to parting with the bull, let Daré come with it himself, and he shall have lands here of my best, equal in extent to his own, a chariot worth sixty-three cows, and my future friendship."

The courier went on his errand with nine followers, and was hospitably received by Daré, who accepted the Queen's terms. But at nightfall Meáv's messengers were chattering among themselves over their cups. One said that Daré had done well to give to nine friendly men the Brown Bull that the four provinces of Erin could not have taken by force out of Ulster. Another said that little thanks were due to him, for if he had not given the bull willingly, Queen Meáv would have forced it from him. Daré's steward happened to bring in food just at that time, and he heard the boast. Angrily throwing down the food among the messengers, he turned back and told what he had heard to his master, who swore by his gods that these unmannerly claimants should not have the Brown Bull either by consent or force.

When this was reported to Meáv, she took up the words of her boastful messenger, and raised an army to march into Ulster. The forces met at Cruachain, whence, after consulting her Druid and a Banshee that appeared to her, the Queen herself led the army of invasion, her husband and her daughter, the Fairbrowed, going with her. When the host was encamped for the night, Meáv contrived to speak privately to each of the chiefs, and promise him for his fidelity the hand of her beautiful daughter, the Fairbrowed, in marriage.

It happened that the Ulstermen lay at that time under a curse of debility, so that the only defender of their border was the youth Cuchulain, and Cuchulain's patrimony was the first to be invaded, for within it lived the owner of the Brown Bull of Chuailgné. Cuchulain, confronting the invaders, claimed of them single combat, and adjured them by the laws of war not to advance further until, in fair successive fights of man to man, he had been conquered. The demand was granted. But days passed, and Cuchulain still was victor in each combat. Meáv became therefore impatient of delay, broke compact, carried fire and sword through Ulster, and marched back to Meath with the Brown Bull.

But now also the time of the curse came to an end, and the Ulstermen,

led by King Conor, Meáv's first husband, pursued the cattle-plunderers, routed them in battle, and drove them in disorder over the Shannon. Meáv, however, had despatched the bull to her own palace before the battle, so the object of the expedition was thus far attained.

But when the Brown Bull of Chualgné found himself in a strange country among strange cattle, he set up such a bellowing as never before had been heard in Connaught. And when those sounds reached him, Ailill's bull, the White-horned, knowing that some strange foe had arrived, rushed to battle with the bellower. The sight of each other was the signal for the fight. The province, says the story, rang with the roar of the two bulls. The sky was darkened by the sods of earth they threw up with their feet, and the foam out of their mouths. Faint-hearted men, women, and children, hid themselves in caves; and the most valiant dared only look on at the fight from afar on the tops of the neighbouring hills.

At last the White-horned turned and fled. He rushed through a pass where sixteen over-bold warriors were standing. These were not only killed and trampled to the ground, but buried several feet in it by the hoofs of the bull that fled and of the bull that followed. The Brown Bull at last overtook his enemy, raised him up on his horns, and so ran off with him. He ran by the gates of Meáv's palace, tossing and shaking Ailill's bull as he went, until at last he shattered him to pieces. Joint by joint he dropped him as he rushed along, and wherever a joint fell, its name remained to the spot ever after. So it is that the place formerly called Ath Mór, the Great Ford, because the loin of the White-horned Bull was dropped there, has been since that time called Ath Luain, or Athlone.

The Brown Bull having shaken his enemy bit by bit from his horns, returned into his own country so furious that everyone fled at his approach. He faced directly to his own home. But the people of the bailé or hamlet hid behind a great rock, which he in his madness mistook for another bull; and so butting with all his force against it, he dashed out his brains and died.

From their histories and legendary tales we now turn to the poetry of the Gaedhels, which seems to have represented always the more solemn celebration of events in the lives, deaths, and burials of chiefs. Among the poems in the Book of Leinster is a death-song, said to have been recited in the year before the birth of our Lord by a famous Queen Meáv, the Half-Red, at the placing of the stone over the cromlech of her husband Cuchorb, son of Moghcorb:—

Old Gaelic  
poetry.

“Moghcorb's son conceals renown,  
He shed blood well with his spears.  
A stone over his grave! 'Tis pity—  
He who carried battle over Cliú Mail.  
My noble king never spoke falsehood;  
In every peril his success was sure.

Black as the raven was his brow ;  
 Sharp as a razor was his spear ;  
 White as lime was his skin ;  
 We used to feast together.  
 High was his shield as a champion,  
 Long as an oar was his arm,  
 The prop against the kings of Erin,  
 He maintained his shield in every cause.  
 He fed with his spear countless wolves  
 At the heels of our man in every battle."

The seven battles that were fought by Cuchorb are next named in his honour, until from his death in the last rises the wail that destruction should have come upon him. Although probably composed in the name of Meáv at a later date, this is, no doubt, one of the most ancient examples of a death-song at the solemn raising of the great upper stone upon the cromlech, by the Gaelic Celts. The exercise of fancy in abundant use of simile is here as noticeable as we shall find its absence to be in the old heroic Anglo-Saxon verse.

But the most interesting fragments of old Gaelic verse are those, few in number, which belong to or are connected by remote tradition with Fionn, Oisín and the Fenians. When in the last century James Macpherson, after publishing some apparently genuine "fragments of ancient poetry collected in the Highlands of Scotland," had proceeded to the fabrication of his sentimental epics *Fingal* and *Temora*, investigation subsequently led a Committee of the Highland Society of Scotland to the conclusion that there were really a few short poems or fragments of ancient Gaelic verse, ascribed to Oisín or relating to him, retained among the Gaels by immemorial tradition; and that, in some degree, verses and legends still retained among the Gaels had been interwoven by Macpherson with his own inventions. A MS. ascribed by the Committee of the Highland Society to the eighth century, which contained the story of the 'Cattle-plunder of Chualgné' and reference to Oisín, has disappeared since it was described in 1805. Professor O'Curry finds among old Irish MSS. only eleven Ossianic poems in records earlier than the fifteenth century. Of these, seven are ascribed to Fionn, two to his son Oisín, one to Fergus Finnbheoil and one to Caeilte. The most important authority is the

Book of Leinster, containing pieces transcribed in the twelfth century. A charter of lands in Morayshire, dated 1220, refers to a "well of the Fein;"<sup>1</sup> a MS. in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh, dating in 1238, contains in Irish character the song of Deirdir, or Deardra (Macpherson's *Darhula*). In Barbour's *Brus*, 1375, the Lord of Lorn is represented quoting to his men Fionn, by the name of Fingal, in his strife against Goll Macmorna, as an example of courage. William Dunbar, in the fifteenth century, refers in his verses to traditions concerning "Fyn Makowle" and "Gow Macmorn." Also Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, inscribing a poem to James IV., tells how he saw in his Palace of Honour, among other characters familiar to the people,—

"Greit Gowmacmorne and Fyn Ma Coul, and how  
They suld be goddis in Ireland as they say."

In this way there can be set forth a tolerably continuous chain of evidence that Fionn was in Scotland, as in Ireland, a popular hero of the Gaels; but it is not necessary to look to a later date when we have extant the collection of Highland Traditions made by Dean James M'Gregor of Lismore, in Argyleshire, and his brother Duncan, all of it before the year 1550, and much of it before 1512. The volume left by them, as 'the Book of the Dean of Lismore,' now forms part of the collection of Gaelic MSS. in the Advocates' Library at Edinburgh.<sup>2</sup> The Dean of Lismore's collection contains twenty-eight Fenian poems, nine attributed to Oisín, (of which one only is not manifestly of the Christian period in which Oisín was only fabled to have lived,) two to Fergus Finnbheoil, one to Caeilte M'Ronan, three to a couple of bards not elsewhere named, and the rest to bards unnamed.

Fionn (which means the Fair-haired) was the son of Cumhaill;

<sup>1</sup> Campbell's 'Popular Tales of the West Highlands,' vol. iv., p. 45, and for the next facts.

<sup>2</sup> A selection of all that is most interesting in The Dean of Lismore's Book has been lately (Edinburgh, 1862) edited, with a translation and notes, by the Rev. Thomas MacLaughlan, and an introduction and additional notes by William F. Skene, Esq., to whom the Faculty of Advocates is indebted for the formation of its important Gaelic collection. To this volume I am indebted for most of the information given in the text.

degree is contained in the Book of Leinster, and the date  
 A.D. 200. leath is assigned in a later compilation of authorities,  
 the is of the Four Masters, to the year 283. Oisín (which  
 means the Little Fawn), the son of Fionn McCumhaill, had a  
 warrior son, Oscar, who killed and who was killed by Cairbré,  
 son of Cormac Mac Art, King of Erin, at the battle of Gabhra,  
 in the year 284. Several poems assume Fionn to have survived  
 that battle a few years. But, as the date of St. Patrick's coming  
 to Ireland is 432, Oisín, who had a son killed in battle 148  
 years earlier, could only have survived in fable to hold with  
 the saint the dialogues ascribed to him by old tradition. The  
 battle of Gabhra (A.D. 284), in which Oisín's son was killed, is  
 the subject of one of the two poems ascribed to Oisín himself  
 in the Book of Leinster. The other poem ascribed to him in  
 this ancient book is nearly eight times as long, and written—a  
 romantic tale—on occasion of the ancient festival games on the  
 Liffey, when men spoke of the blindness of Oisín, who outlived  
 his friends.<sup>1</sup> Oisín was bard and warrior. His brother Fergus  
 Finnbheoil (which means the Eloquent) was chief bard, and  
 nothing but a bard. Ascribed to him there is, in the Book of  
 the Dean of Lismore, a poem in short, smooth alliterative lines,  
 with vocal concords, that is said in form of language as in  
 matter to bear evidence of a remote antiquity. I quote it as  
 a characteristic and trustworthy example of the most polished  
 form of ancient Gaelic poetry. Desire to make peace in a  
 quarrel between his father and Goll McMorna, chiefly by putting  
 Goll into good-humour before proposing terms of accommoda-  
 tion, is the purport of the song. Every stop indicates the close  
 of a line of verse :—<sup>2</sup>

“High-minded Goll, Who combats Fionn, A hero brave, Bold in assault,  
 His bounty free, Fierce to destroy, Beloved of all, Goll gentle brave, Son of  
 great Morn, Hardy in war, His praise of old, A comely man, King soldierly  
 free, Of no soft speech, No lack of sense, Cheerful as great. In battle's day,  
 He moved a prince; Though soft his skin, Not soft his deed; Of portly mould,  
 A fruitful branch, His heart sincere, He trains the young. 'Bove mountains  
 high, Rises in victory, We ever fear, When he assails.

“I tell you Fionn, Avoid the man, Terror of Goll, Shall make you quail.

<sup>1</sup> A free rhymed translation of this poem, by Dr. Anster, will be found at the  
 end of the volume.



Soothe him rather, Better than fight. Skilful and just, He rules his  
His bounty wide, A bloody man, First in the schools, Of gentle blood  
noble race, Liberal kind, Untired in fight, No prince so wise. Brothers  
locks, Marble his skin, Perfect his form, All full of grace, Fiercely  
When aught is due, In vigour great, Of fairest face, No king like Caelte at

"I tell you Fionn, His strength as waves, In battle's crash; song  
gait, Comely his form, Goll's skilled fence, No play when roused; princely his  
give, Dreadful his strength, Manly his mould, Soldierly grace, hied. Ready to  
tell, His grace and power; A fearful foe, Ready his hands, Caelte, Ne'er could I  
A cheerful face. Like murmuring seas, Rushed to the fight, Concealed his wrath,  
great in deed. Powerful his arm, Choice amidst kings. What, A lion bold, As  
teeth so white. 'Tis he that wounds, The greatest foe. Joyful his way, His  
A victor sure, Desires the fight. In history learn'd, W. His purpose firm,  
his sword, Contemptuous Goll, Plunders at will, A fearless warrior bold, Sharp is  
is he, Dreadful in look, Leopard in fight, Fierce as a hawk, A less man. Wrathful  
A circle true, E'er by him stood. He hurls his dart, Bound, Of women loved.  
are his cheeks, In blossom rich, Of beautiful form, Unchanged success, No  
stream so swift, As his assault, MacMorn more brave, Than any told, Of  
powerful speech, It far resounds. He's truly great, No, Than any told, Of  
despise, Yet firm resolves, Gentle yet brisk, Forsake. Liberal just, Does not  
kings, No powerless arm; There fierce his mien, And no friend. In fight of  
roused his wrath. He's third of the chase. Strong his blow, When

"Noble McCumhail, Soothe and promise, Give peace  
and guile. During my day, Whatever it be, I'd give place to Goll, Check wrath  
the chase.

"Let's strive no more. Soft do thou speak, Fionn, Without guile, A third of  
of the hounds.

"Goll leave thy wrath, With us have peace, Now is love to Goll And third  
Fionn's forest a third.

"That will I take, Fergus dear friend. My wrath without grudge, Have of

"Friend without guile, Lips thin and red, Bound is gone. No more I ask.  
the praise, High-minded Goll."

My strength, Shall win

Ascribed to Fergus, there is found in two  
genuinely ancient poem. It accounts for the Irish MSS. only one  
by telling how Fergus's brother Oisín, his for the name of a spring  
guiled into a cavern, and there kept by a woman hunting, was be-  
month, during all which time he cut out the fairies for a twelve-  
his spear and cast them in the stream. Chips from the handle of  
was looking for him, at last came to him. His father Fionn, who  
floating down, knew immediately that the stream, saw a chip  
spear, followed the stream up to its source, and it was part of Oisín's

Caelte McRonan, the other chief. The source, and saved his son.  
and one of his bravest warriors, fleet poet, was Fionn's cousin  
Of the songs of Caelte, the one recorded of foot, famous in song.  
the SS. is a love story, ascribed to him, and left in the ancient Irish  
Wil the lady named Cliodhna the local r. The which finds in the drowning

the coast of county Cork. It purports to have been him to St. Patrick, and must, therefore, have been used by another poet in the early Christian times. Caeilte, A.D. 200-Oisín, was fabled to have survived the rest of the Fenians, his per- lived to see the coming of St. Patrick and to travel with his on his missionary journeys through the country. The tale of the first labours of the priest was thus cunningly interwoven with the native poetry and legend of the Gael. With lively wit and some dramatic skill the blind old bard is represented, for example, in the Dialogue with St. Patrick—still traditional in Mayo and the Western Highlands—as expressing Pagan weariness at all the ways of that “clerk of clergy and the bells,” and sighing for the old days of chase with Fionn’s hounds and the lost friendship of “Fionn the hospitable, heart without malice, heart stern in defence of battle.” Says Patrick—

“Now is Fionn the Whitehanded placed by God among the devils, and although once great his strength to rely upon, he is weak now in the country of pains.

“*Oisín*.—My affliction and my grief I own! not that myself or Fionn would ever have any regard for devils, however hideous.

“*Patrick*.—It is better for thee to be with me and the clergy, as thou art, than to be with Fionn and the Fenians, for they are in hell without order of release.

“*Oisín*.—By thy book and its meaning, by thy crozier and by thy image, better were it for me to share their torments, than to be among the clergy continually talking. . . . Son of Alphenen of the wise words, woe is me that I am near the clergy of the bells! For a time I lived with Caeilte, and then we were not poor.”<sup>1</sup>

Such conversations of Oisín and Caeilte with St. Patrick, including the accounts given by them to the saint of legend and history attached to places that he visited, form the substance of the one unquestionably ancient example of old Gaelic imaginative tales that mingled prose and verse. It is called ‘The Dialogue of the Ancient Men,’ and the oldest fragment of it occurs in the Irish Book of Lismore, written about the year 1400. One of its incidental poems is

Gaelic tales  
in prose and  
verse.

<sup>1</sup> ‘Poems of Oisín, Bard of Erin.’ From the Irish. By John Hawley, (London, 1857.) The Dialogue of St. Patrick in this volume is taken from the Mayo oral tradition, corresponds exactly in style and manner with the ‘Ossian’s Prayer,’ in the Book of the Dean of St. Asaph, taken from Scottish tradition.

that which is fabled to have won the hand of Credé, a fair princess of Kerry, who had declared that she would wed none but that suitor who was so gifted in the art of poetry as to be able to write a poem in description of her house and furniture. As a lively picture of Gaelic luxury in early Christian times, at the close of the "Bronze Period," I quote a passage or two from Professor Eugene O'Curry's literal translation of this poem :

"Happy the house in which she is :  
Between men, and children, and women ;  
Between Druids and musicians ;  
Between cupbearers and doorkeepers.

\* \* \* \* \*

A bowl she has whence berry-juice flows,  
By which she colours her eyebrows black ;  
She has clear vessels of fermenting ale ;  
Cups she has, and beautiful goblets.  
The colour of her house is like the colour of lime ;  
Within it are couches and green rushes ;  
Within it are silks and blue mantles ;  
Within it are red, gold, and crystal cups.  
The corner stones of its sunny chamber  
Are all of silver and yellow gold ;  
Its thatch in stripes of faultless order,  
Of wings of brown and crimson red.  
Two door-posts of green I see ;  
Nor is its door without beauty,  
Long renowned for its carved silver,  
Is the lintel that is over the door.  
Credé's chair is on your right hand,  
The pleasantest of the pleasant ;  
All over a blaze of mountain gold,  
At the foot of her beautiful couch.  
A gorgeous couch in full array,  
Stands directly above the chair ;  
It was made by (at?) Tuilé in the East,  
Of yellow gold and precious stones.  
There is another bed on your right hand,  
Of gold and silver without defect,  
Curtained and soft,  
And with graceful rods of golden bronze.

\* \* \* \* \*

An hundred feet spans Credé's house  
From one corner to the other,  
And twenty feet are fully measured  
In the breadth of its noble door.  
Its portico is thatched  
laid with wings of blue and yellow birds ;

Its lawn in front and its well  
Of crystal and of carnegal.

\* \* \* \* \*

There is a vat of royal bronze,  
Whence flows the pleasant juice of malt ;  
An apple-tree overhangs the vat  
With the abundance of its heavy fruit,  
When Credé's goblet is filled  
With the ale of the noble vat,  
There drop down into the cup directly  
Four apples at the same time ;  
The four attendants that have been named  
Arise and go to the distribution ;  
They present to four of the guests around,  
A drink to each man and an apple."

Although Credé's bower has no doubt been partly furnished with the cheap ornaments of poetical speech, and although the picture is but of a large hut pompous with barbaric luxury, yet there is a truth to the old Gaelic character in all this glow of gold, chased silver, bronze, and gay colour in raiment, in the painting of the very thatch, and in the turn of fancy that suggested for the lady's porch a roofing with the blue and yellow wings of birds. The Gaels were skilful in the use of dyes, and had an Oriental taste for the enjoyment of bright colour. Thus, for example, in the famous tale of the 'Cattle-plunder of Chuaillgné,' there is introduced a series of descriptions of the chiefs of Ulster who pursued and beat the army of Queen Meáv: it is no dingy barbarous host that rises to our view. "Another company have come to the same hill," said MacRoth, through whose eyes the army is pictured in Homeric fashion; "it is wild, and unlike the other companies. Some are with red cloaks; others with light-blue cloaks; others with deep-blue cloaks; others with green or gray, or white or yellow cloaks, bright and fluttering about them. There is a young red-freckled lad, with a crimson cloak in their midst; a golden brooch in that cloak at his breast; a shirt of kingly linen with fastenings of red gold at his skin; a white shield with hooks of red gold, at his shoulder, faced with gold, and with a golden rim; a small gold-hilted sword at his side; a light, sharp, shining spear to his shoulder." Such were the chiefs who fought with Oisín and the Fenians, and who with fancies gay as their cloaks listened to the

The Celtic  
influence on  
English literature.

histories, poems, and legends of the first literary men concerning whom there remains record in Britain. We shall find as this narrative advances that the main current of English literature cannot be disconnected from the lively Celtic wit in which it has one of its sources. The Celts do not form an utterly distinct part of our mixed population. But for early, frequent, and various contact with the race that in its half-barbarous days invented Oisín's dialogues with St. Patrick, and that quickened afterwards the Northmen's blood in France, Germanic England would not have produced a Shakespeare. The recollections of the past on which we are now dwelling are not to be taken as mere antiquarian details. They contribute to our full sense of more than the history of the formation of the English language. They are an essential chapter in the more interesting tale of the formation of the English character, the right reading of which is the most vital part of any study of the English written mind.

The chief exercise of the Gaelic imagination from St. Patrick's time until the year 1000 was in the repetition and invention of tales having Fionn, Oisín, Fergus, Caeilte, and the Fenians for heroes. One of the oldest and most famous of these was the tale of—

The Fenian  
Tales.

*The Pursuit of Diarmaid and Grainné.*

When Fionn went to Tara to sue Grainné, the daughter of Cormac Mac Art, he took with him his son Oisín, his grandson Oscar, and a handsome chief officer, named Diarmaid O'Duibhné. Fionn was an old, war-worn man. Oisín and Diarmaid pleased the lady more. When, therefore, she sent her cup round at the feast, selecting as was usual four chiefs at a time, each of whom passed it to four neighbours, she drugged her cup, and contrived that all should drink from it but Oisín and Diarmaid. They who drank slept. When these alone remained awake, Grainné told Oisín that she would rather marry him than the old man. Oisín would not betray his father. Then the Princess begged of Diarmaid that he would run off with her. So it was that they fled together. Fionn, when he awoke, pursued, and sent his best men out in various directions; but Diarmaid had the good will of the other Fenians, and they never came upon his traces except when Fionn himself was of the party. And then it always happened that in the moment before capture Diarmaid and Grainné, by trick or agility, contrived a wonderful escape.

The pursuit extended over all Erin, and the description of it forms a lively topographical

of its products, customs, and traditions. To this day also throughout Ireland many cromlechs are called by the country-people Beds of Diarmaid and Grainné.

Another very famous Fenian tale narrates the Battle of Finntrágha, in West Kerry, Anglicised into Ventry Harbour. The battle was fought by Fionn and his warriors against an emperor of all the world except Erin, who came to subdue Erin also. The invader's fleet had been piloted by a traitor into the noble harbour of Finntrágha. Fionn was swimming and fishing when his warders of the coast brought news of the invasion. Like news having been received by several chiefs and warriors of the Tuatha dé Danann, they marched also to the defence, and the enemy was beaten off after a contest of a twelvemonth and a day.

We have here the Fenians and the Tuatha dé Danann fighting as one people to drive an invader from the coast. ~~Irish tradition says that the Fenians were an ancient militia or standing army, employed only on home service for protecting the coasts from invasion.~~ Each of the four provinces, says the tradition, had its bard; that of Leinster, to which Fionn and his family belonged, being called the Clauna Baoisgne. This militia is said to have been paid by the king, billeted on the people in the winter, but to have lived in summer by the chase; and these are imagined to have been the qualifications of a Fenian:

"Every soldier was required to swear: that, without regard to her fortune, he would choose a wife for her virtue, her courtesy, and her good manners; that he would never offer violence to a woman; that as far as he could he would relieve the poor; and that he would not refuse to fight nine men of any other nation.

"No person could be received into the service unless his father and mother, and all his relatives, gave security that none of them should revenge his death upon the person who might slay him, but that they would leave the matter to his fellow-soldiers.

"The youth himself must be well acquainted with the twelve books of poetry, and be able to compose verses. He must be a perfect master of defence: to prove this he was placed in a field of sedge reaching up to his knees, having in his hands a target and a hazel stick as long as a man's arm. Nine experienced soldiers, from a distance of nine ridges of land, were to hurl their spears at him at once: if he was unhurt he was admitted, but if wounded he was sent off with a reproach.

"He must also run well and defend himself when in flight: to try his activity he was made to run through a wood, having a start of a tree's breadth, the whole of the Fenians pursuing him: if he was overtaken or wounded in

the wood he was refused, as too sluggish and unskilful to fight with honour among such valiant troops.

"Also, he must have a strong arm and be able to hold his weapon steadily.

"Also, when he ran through a wood in chase his hair should not come untied: if it did he was rejected.

"He must be so swift and light of foot as not to break a rotten stick by standing upon it; able also to leap over a tree as high as his forehead, and to stoop under a tree that was lower than his knees. Without stopping or lessening his speed, he must be able to draw a thorn out of his foot.

"Finally, he must take an oath of fidelity.

"The Rev. Geoffry Keating, who wrote a History of Erin in the year 1630, gravely says, 'So long as these terms of admission were exactly insisted upon, the militia of Ireland were an invincible defence to their country, and a terror to rebels at home and enemies abroad.'"<sup>1</sup>

Goll MacMorna had slain Fionn's father Cumhaill in battle, and was Fionn's mortal enemy in early life. Afterwards he made a peace with him, and fought under him as chieftain of the Connaught Fenians. But the supremacy of the Clanna MacMorna was refused, and at last Fionn and his clan, defying the throne itself, were attacked by all the forces of Erin except those of the King of Munster, who took part with him, and suffered carnage in that battle of Gabhra wherein Oisín's son Oscar and the King Cairbré fell by each other's hands. Fionn, who was absent, arrived only in time to close his grandson's eyes, and after this defeat peace had no sweets for him and war no triumphs. Fionn died at last, it is said, by the lance of an assassin.

It is noticeable, however, that the Fenians were not confined to Erin. In the ancient poem on the battle of Gabhra we read of "the bands of the Fians of Alban"—Alban being the old name of Scotland north of the Firth of Forth and Clyde—"and the supreme King of Breatan"—Breatan being southern Scotland, of which Dunbreton, now Dunbarton, was the chief seat,—"belonging to the Order of the Feinne of Alban;" and also that "the Fians of Lochlan were powerful." Now Lochlan was an ancient name for Germany north of the Rhine; but when the Norwegian and Danish pirates appeared in the ninth century they were called Lochlanaels, and the name of Lochlan was transferred to Norway and Denmark. It has been argued<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Abridged from Simpson's 'Poems of Oisín.'

<sup>2</sup> By Mr. Skene in the Introduction to the 'Book of the Dean of Lismore,' pp. lxxiii-lxxx.

from this that the Fenians were not a militia of Gaels, but that they were a distinct Celtic race, connected with the only two races who are spoken of as having come in oldest time from Lochlan, namely, the Tuatha dé Danann and the Cruithne. These are thought to have been some of the Celts who preceded the Germanic peoples now occupying the north German shore and Scandinavia. The Tuatha dé Danann (Tuads of the Dan country) landed in Scotland, and, approaching the headlands of the north-western shore, gave to the country the name of Alban (Highland or Alp-land, the words Alb and Alp being of one Celtic origin), which, as Albion, became the first native name of the whole island. Their own name of Tuads is supposed to have become associated with the river Tweed. The Tuatha dé Danann passed, as tradition has already told us, into Erin, and partly occupied the land before the Milesian brothers came from Spain. The Cruithne, whom some connect with the Picts, first landed from Lochlan in Erin, and migrated thence to Alban. To the bards, then, of these northern Celts, who had not reached our shores by way of southern Europe, the Fenians and their poets may have been allied most closely. The traditions of the Cruithne, in describing their migrations, even name as the mythi poet of their race one whom they called "Huasein."

The chief MS. materials for a study of the old Gaelic Language and Literature are,—

LATIN MSS. OF THE 8TH OR 9TH CENTURY WITH GAELIC GLOSSES.<sup>1</sup>

1. A codex of *Priscian*, in the Library at St. Gall in Switzerland, crowded with Irish glosses, interlinear and marginal, as far as p. 222. (They were Irish monks who first carried Christianity to Switzerland.)

2. A codex of *St. Paul's Epistles*, in the University Library at Würzburg, containing even more glosses than the St. Gall *Priscian*.

3. A Latin *Commentary on the Psalms*, ascribed now to St. Columbanus, in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, yet more crowded with ancient Irish glosses.

4. A codex at Carlsruhe containing *some of the works of Bede*. An entry of the death of Aed, King of Ireland, establishes the date 817.

5. A second codex of *Priscian*, also at Carlsruhe, with fewer glosses than that of St. Gall.

6. A *miscellaneous* codex of St. Gall, including medical charms, in which



Goibnén the smith and Diancecht the leech of the Tuatha dé Danann are mentioned.

7. A codex at Cambray, written between the years 763 and 790, containing *canons of an Irish council held A.D. 684, and a fragment of an Irish sermon containing Latin sentences.*

#### ANNALS AND OTHER LITERATURE.—11TH CENTURY.

The *Synchronisms of Flann of Monasterboice*, a monk, who died in 1056, a sketch of Universal History from the remotest times.

The chronological *Poem of Gilla Caemhain*, who died A.D. 1072.

The *Annals of Tighernach* (pronounced Teor-nah) O'Braoin, abbot of the Monasteries of Clonmacnois and Roscommon, who died A.D. 1088. Of the *Annals of Tighernach* there are seven MS. copies, all defective, and a vellum fragment.

The *Annals of Innisfallen*, believed by Professor O'Curry to have been mainly written by Maelsuthain, a prince of the tribes of Loch Léin or Killarney, who was educated in the monastery of the lake, and died in it, retired from the world, A.D. 1009. These annals, being continued to 1215, are commonly ascribed to the 13th century.

The *Leabhar na-h-Uidre*, or Book of the Dun Cow: a fragment remains of 138 folio pages, written by Maelmiore, who was killed in 1106, contains ancient poems and tales.

#### 12TH CENTURY.

The *Book of Leinster*, compiled by Finn M'Gorman, Bishop of Kildare, who died A.D. 1160, for the Dermot M'Murroch who invited Strongbow into Ireland. The book, now in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, contains more than 400 pages of large folio vellum.

#### 14TH CENTURY.

The *Book of Ballymote*, 502 pp. of largest folio vellum, was being written in 1391. In Library of Royal Irish Academy.

The *Leabhar Breac*, or Speckled Book, in the same Library.

The *Yellow Book of Lecuin*, historical pieces in prose and verse, copied in 1390. Is in Library of Trinity College, Dublin, where is also the *Book of Lecuin*, compiled in 1416 by MacFirbises of Lecain in Sligo.

#### 15TH CENTURY.

The *Annals of Ulster*, so called because they were compiled in Ulster, and treat more of Ulster affairs than of those of other provinces. Compiled by Cathal M'Guire of Loch Erne, who died A.D. 1498. The *Annals* were continued afterwards to the year 1604.

#### 16TH CENTURY.

*Annals of Kilronan* or Loch Cé extend to 1590.

*Annals of Connacht*, a fragment detailing Connaught history from 1223 to 1562.

#### 17TH CENTURY.

The *Annals of the Four Masters*, collected from ancient MS. material by Father Michael O'Clery and his three colleagues, masters in antiquarian lore, was published in 1634.

By the same compilers, the *Succession of the Kings* and the *Book of*

## CHAPTER III.

THE Cymry carry back their literature, not like the Gaels to an Oisin, a Fergus, and a Caeilte, of the third century, but to a Taliesin, a Llywarch, an Ancurin, and a Myrddin, <sup>The Cymry.</sup> or Merlin, of the sixth. Of the traditions of an earlier date, it has been noticed<sup>1</sup> that they are connected with sites only in South Wales and the north of England. Hence it is inferred that in North Wales the Gael held ground much longer than in other parts of England. Some have considered that North Wales came for the first time under full Cymric rule when it was called Rheged, a gift, to that Urien who led the forces of the northern Cymry against Ida and his Angles, while King Arthur battled in the south. This is that Urien whose prowess Taliesin and his brethren celebrated; for in the most ancient Cymric literature we hear again the battle-cries of conflict between the resisting Celt and the advancing Teuton, and are touched with the profound melancholy of the bards who sang the death-struggle of heroes in a hopeless patriotic war. To speak, therefore, of the songs of the old Cymric bards is to speak also of the first full occupation of the plains of England by the Anglo-Saxon.

The first full occupation. Reason has been shown for belief that, after the crossing of the Cymric Celts from Gaul into the south-east of Britain—whence the few Gaels who had wandered so far from Erin and our western shores were driven back on the main body of their own people—the Cymry were, in their turn, pressed by the Belgæ, a Germanic race, who partly dislodged them, first in Gaul, and afterwards in Britain. These people, as we have seen, had occupied the Frisian shore of the continent, and the coast of France

Germanic settlements in Britain before A.D. 449.

east of the Seine. But the ancient language of the Frislar coast is allied more closely than Old Saxon itself, or any other language, to the language of the Anglo-Saxons. Anglo-Saxon and old Frisian are, in fact, allied so closely that they seem to be only dialects of the same tongue. A dialect also of that tongue may have been the language spoken by the Belgæ who had crossed into Britain before Cæsar's time; and the main bulk of the Anglo-Saxons may have been only Belgæ of a later date, and from another part of their long line of continental shore opposite Britain. The beginning of the Germanic immigration is, in fact, prehistoric. Speaking of Britain from direct knowledge, Cæsar said,<sup>1</sup> "The interior is inhabited by those who are traditionally said to be natives of the island itself; the sea-coast by those who have crossed from Belgium for the sake of spoil or war, their settlements being almost all called by the names of the places whence they came. Having carried war into Britain, they remained there and began to cultivate the fields."<sup>2</sup> This process of gradual conquest and tillage led to the existence of a recognised "Saxon" fringe of population, Saxon being the name formerly applied from without to the Germanic population in this country. In the reign of Diocletian, A.D. 290, Mamertinus the orator, in his panegyric on Maximian, the Emperor's colleague, speaks of a victory at London, won by the Roman provincials over Franks (Germans), who occupied the city. In 306, Constantius dying at York, a German chief in Britain, Eborac King of the Alemanni, helped his son Constantine to assume the empire. Towards the close of the period of Roman occupation, the '*Notitia utriusque Imperii*,' compiled between the years 369 and 408, describe the administration of a Saxon Shore (*Littus Saxonicum*) in Britain and in Gaul. The *Littus Saxonicum* in Britain appears from the places named in it—our Brancaster and Burgh Castle, in Norfolk; Othona, in

<sup>1</sup> Lib. v. c. 12.

<sup>2</sup> The writer of the article upon the Belgæ in Dr. William Smith's '*Dictionary of Ancient Geography*,' believes that the Belgæ were partly Germanic and partly Celtic. "The fact," he says, "of Cæsar making such a river as the Marne a boundary between Celtic and Belgic peoples, is a proof that he saw some marked distinction between Belgæ and Celtæ. But if we exclude," he adds, "the Menassii, the savage Nervii, and the pure Germans," the rest may have been Celts.

Essex, now under the sea; Dover, Lympne, Reculvers, and Richborough, in Kent; Pevensey and the river Adur, in Sussex—to have extended from the Wash to Southampton Water. It has been argued that the Saxon Shore, which is called also in the same record the Saxon Boundary (Limes), meant a shore not occupied by, but liable to attack from, a Germanic people. This, however, is only argued to evade one of the difficulties made by rejection of that evidence of Cæsar, Strabo, and Tacitus, with which the appointment in Britain of a Roman Count of the Saxon Shore is, without strain of interpretation, perfectly consistent. Eutropius, who died about the year 370, speaks<sup>1</sup> of the Franks and Saxons who infested the sea between the coasts of Gaul and Britain. Ammianus Marcellinus, in whom Gibbon acknowledged an accurate and faithful guide, and who writes of his own times, in his History which closes with the year 378, speaks under date 364 and 368 of the Britons or Cymry as invaded by the Picts, Scots, and Attacots (in Erin the Aitheach Tuatha, a turbulent unprivileged class of the Gaels);<sup>2</sup> and the “Franks and the Saxons, who are on the frontiers of the Gauls, ravaging the country wherever they could effect an entrance.” He tells, also, of the Franks and Saxons having been again fought with in London city, being attacked and beaten by Theodosius in “Londinium, an ancient town now called Augusta,” as they were driving the inhabitants prisoners, in chains, with cattle before them.<sup>3</sup>

But at this time the Cymry had not yet driven the Gaels or “Scots” out of North Wales. After Britain had been relinquished by the Romans at the close of the fourth century, fresh successes of the Gaels and Picts caused aid to be invoked by the Cymry from Roman legions, by which they were helped in the year 418, only to fall again into extremity, and send by ambassadors to Rome in 446 “the Groans of the Britons.” The Romans had no thought to spare for their own troubles; and it is said to have been by the advice of Vortigern that the Cymry made common cause with the intruders from the south-east, the Saxons, against the

Pressure of  
the Cymry  
and the  
Saxons on  
the Gaels in  
Gwynedd, or  
North Wales.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. xii. cap. 21.

<sup>2</sup> ‘O’Curry MS. Mat. of Irish Hist.,’ p. 230.

Gaethels and the Picts. Then, with the landing of Hengist and Horsa ascribed to the year 449, success began to crown the work of forcing the Gaethels in Western Britain to return to Erin. Very remarkable illustration of this is afforded by the recurrence five-and-twenty times in Wales, and twenty times out of the five-and-twenty in North Wales, of the name Gwyddel (for Gaethel) attached to places which may have been remaining strongholds held by the Gaels after their main body had been cast out by the Cymry, with the added pressure of the Saxon. The old name of Holyhead was Cerrig y Gwyddel; and there are three other Gwyddels in Anglesey, four in Caernarvon, four in Merioneth, six in Cardigan—one of them, Cefn y Gwyddel (the Ridge of the Gael), having near it, not far from the sea, a farm still called Lletty'r Cymro (the Quarters of the Cymry). All the sites indicate pressure from the east towards the sea, and are in old passes, morasses, or places at which a last stand could be made. The Anglesey "Gwyddels" are among the low grounds of the western side, intersected and partially cut off by creeks and quicksands. In Caernarvonshire, two are at the utmost point of the wild promontory of Lleyn, to which we can well imagine the Gwyddelod to have been beaten back step by step; a third is at the entrance of the wild defensible pass of Llanberis. In Merionethshire, two are at the foot of the Cader Idris chain of mountains, protected on the north by the estuary of the Mawddach, and on the west by the marshes and the sea; another is among marshes at the mouth of a valley leading to Cader Idris, the Montgomeryshire stronghold; and two others, in Cardiganshire, are on the skirts of the Plinlimmon group. That in Radnorshire, and two of those in Cardiganshire, stand at the entrance of gorges leading into the savage region of mountain and moorland, then and long afterwards clothed with impenetrable forests, between the Wye, the Tywg, and the Taifi. The Gwyddels in Cardiganshire and one in Pembroke-shire are close upon the western coast. Twll y Gwyddel, in Glamorganshire, lies also in a mountain pass.<sup>1</sup> To the list of five-and-twenty I may add one Gwyddel more, a Gwyddelwern

<sup>1</sup> 'Vestiges of the Gael in Gwynedd.' By the Rev. William Basil Jones. London and Tenby, 1857.

in Denbighshire, between the hills three miles to the north of Corwen.

The names, too, are significant. The old name of Holyhead, Cerrig y Gwyddel, meant Gael Stones. There are Gael Mountains, Gael Ness, Gael Moor, Gael Pass, Gael Ridge, Gael Knoll, Gael Mead, Gael Grove, Gael Alderwood, Gael Hole, Gael's Cots, Gael Church, two Gael hamlets, a Gael town, a Gael port, and in two places the Gael's Walls.

But their German allies soon began to overwhelm the Cymry; and after the deposition of Vortigern, the struggle of the Cymric Celts was to resist the occupation of their land by successive warrior bands of Anglo-Saxon colonists. Six settlements by invasion, spread over a period of a century, are recorded upon the authority of the Saxon Chronicle, which was not brought into its present form until after the death of Bede, and of Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History,' dedicated to a king who reigned in Northumberland between the years 729 and 737. Of these settlements, the first, under Hengist and Horsa, is said to have been of Jutes, the next three were of Saxons, the last two of Angles. They were settlements:—

Pressure of  
the Saxons on  
the Cymry.  
The record  
of six settle-  
ments.

1. Of Jutes, landing A.D. 449, under Hengist and Horsa, at Ebbsfleet, in the Isle of Thanet. Six years later they established the kingdom of Kent.

2. Of Saxons, landing A.D. 477, under Ælla, in Sussex, which they made the kingdom of the South Saxons.

3. Of Saxons, landing A.D. 495, under Cerdic, in Hampshire, where they established the kingdom of the West Saxons (Wessex).

4. Of Saxons, landing A.D. 530, leader unnamed, in Essex.

5. Of Angles, who landed in Norfolk and Suffolk during Cerdic's reign in Wessex.

6. Of Angles, landing A.D. 547, under Ida, on the south-eastern coast of Scotland, between Tweed and Forth.

It is the stir of battle in the conflict of the Cymry with these last comers that animates the oldest literature of the Cymric Celts. Against Ida and his Angles, Urien Rheged led the warriors of Britain, and the praise of Urien was sung by many bards who received gifts from his hand. Urien fought not only against Ida, but after Ida's

Connexion of  
the ancient  
literature of  
the Cymry  
with the  
Anglo-Saxon  
conquests.

death against his sons and grandsons, and was treacherously slain by Morcant, another Cymric chief, while besieging Theodoric, the son of Ida, on his extreme seaward border in the island of Lindisfarne, which is off the coast near the mouth of the Tweed. Ida died in 560; his son Adda, reigning eight years, succeeded him, and then followed the four years' reign of Ethelric, the son of Adda, before the accession of Theodoric, the son of Ida, who reigned seven years. Urien, therefore, did not survive the year 579. The contest with Ida, the Angle, ended in the formation of the great Anglian kingdom of Northumbria; and the original territory of Urien probably was in the country of the Cumbrian Britons, lying between the vale of the Clyde and the Ribble, with the sea for western boundary, and the eastern boundary varying with the fortune of war, since it touched the Anglian or Saxon kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia. These Cymry of the Scottish Lowlands, Cumberland, Westmoreland, and North Lancashire, were called also neighbours to the Otadini, who had occupied the shores of Northumberland, from Flamborough Head to the Frith of Forth. Overpowered by the Angles, some of the Cymry at last withdrew from Cumberland to Wales, while others remained, living quietly under the new rule, or maintaining among the hills for the next century or two an acknowledged independence.<sup>1</sup>

Urien's district of Rheged (a gift), placed by Sir Francis Palgrave in the forests south of Scotland, is assigned by traditions that make Urien a nephew of King Arthur, to Glamorgan; and the country is said to have been given to Urien for his valour in driving certain Irish Gaels from Gower, in Glamorgan, back to Anglesea. He appears, accordingly, in French Arthurian romances, as Sir Urience of Gore. The Cymric bards of the sixth century stand foremost in connection with the wars of Urien and of the Strathclyde Britons—Llywarch Hen, who was bard and prince; Aneurin, who was bard and warrior; and Taliesin, who was bard alone. To each of the latter poets has been given in posthumous honour the name King of Bards. But if we are now to judge them by the

few remains of each that are not clearly spurious, Aneurin and Taliesin were excelled by Llywarch Hen.

Taliesin (Shining Forehead) was in the highest repute in the middle of the twelfth century, and he was then and afterwards, unless we except Merlin, the hero of the <sup>Taliesin.</sup> greatest number of romantic legends. He is said to have been the son of Henwg the bard, or Saint Henwg, of Carlleon-upon-Usk, and to have been educated in the school of Cattwg, at Llanveithin, in Glamorgan, where the historian Gildas was his fellow pupil. Seized when a youth by Irish pirates while fishing at sea in a coracle of osier covered with leather, he is said, probably by rational interpretation of a later fable of his history, to have escaped by using a wooden buckler for a boat; so he came into the fishing weir of Elphin, one of the sons of Urien. Urien made him Elphin's instructor, and gave him an estate of land. But once introduced to the court of that great warrior-chief, Taliesin became his foremost bard, followed him in his wars, and sang his victories. He sings victories over Ida at Argoed about the year 547, at Gweun-Estrad between that year and 560, at Menao about the year 560. After the death of Urien, Taliesin was the bard of his son Owain, by whose hand Ida fell. After the death of all Urien's sons, Taliesin mourned the past in Wales, dying, it is said, at Bangor Teivy, in Cardiganshire, and he was buried under a cairn near Aberystwith. Taliesin is named by Aneurin in the 'Gododin'—"I, Aneurin, will sing what is known to Taliesin, who communicates to me his thoughts, or a strain of Gododin before the dawn of the bright day." Whence it is to be inferred that Taliesin had achieved high fame as a contemporary bard when Aneurin produced that chant of deadly conflict with the Angles. Christianity was at this time taking root among the Cymry. Saint David was a contemporary of Aneurin and Taliesin; and one of the few poems ascribed to the latter bard, which are not obviously of later origin, is one said to be "dedicated in praise of baptism." But the poems which seem to be most unquestionably songs of Taliesin, handed down with more or less of subsequent change or addition from the days of Urien, are those which celebrate the praise of Urien himself, and his son Owain, or describe their battles. Take for example—where Flamdwyn, the fire-bearer, is supposed to



represent *Ida* himself—this song<sup>1</sup> of a battle fought about the year 570:—

*“The Battle of Argoed Llwyfain.”*

“On Saturday there was a great battle,  
From the rising of the sun until the setting.  
Fflamdwyn hastened in four divisions  
Bent upon overwhelming Rheged.  
They reached from Argoed to Arfynyd:  
They were splendid only for one day,  
Fflamdwyn cried with much blustering,  
‘Will they give the hostages, and are they ready?’  
Owain, standing upon the rampart, answered him,  
‘They will not give them; they are not, nor shall be ready!’  
Afflicted would have been the hero, Cenen, son of Cool,  
If he had given hostages to any one.  
Loudly Urien, the chief, proclaimed his will,—  
‘Let my kinsmen come together,  
And we will raise on the hills our banner,  
And will turn against those warriors our faces,  
And will lift above the heads of men our spears,  
And will seek Fflamdwyn in his army,  
And will slay him together with his troop.’

Because of the battle of Argoed Llwyfain  
There were many dead;  
Red were the ravens through the strife of men.  
And hasty men carried the news.

I will divine the year, whose life is on the wane;  
But till I fall into old age  
And the painful grasp of death,  
May I never smile  
If I praise not Urien.”

If he praised not Urien, there was neither wine nor bread for Taliesin. He was a bard, and not a warrior, who lived by and praised the liberality of the chief, the next good thing after the valour that gave power of gifts into his hand. “The broad spoils of the spear,” says Taliesin, in another of these songs,—

*“The Spoils of Taliesin.”*

“The broad spoils of the spear reward my song, Delivered before the bright, smiling hero. The most resolute of chieftains is Urien. No peaceful trafficker

<sup>1</sup> This and the other examples of Taliesin I take, with a few changes in the choice of words to give the sense, from ‘Taliesin; or, the Bards and Druids of Britain. A Translation of the Remains of the Earliest Welsh Bards, and an examination of the Bardic Mysteries.’ By D. W. Nash. London, 1858. book based on a wholesome scepticism.

is he; Clamorous, loud-shouting, shrill, mighty, and highly exalted. Every one knows of the extermination on the side of Merwydd and Mordei. The chief is very swift to prepare pleasure; When harpers play in hall he is of peaceful cheer, A protector in Aeron; Excellent his wine, his poets, his musicians: He gives no rest to his enemies; He is the great strength of the Briton people. Like a whirling fiery meteor across the earth, Like a wave coming from Lwyfenydd, Like the sweet song of Gwenn and Gweithen, Like Mor, the very courteous, is Urien. In the assembly of a hundred war-heroes He directs and is the leader among princes, He is chief of the people of swift horses. In the beginning of May in complete order of battle, When his people send for him, he is coming. Eagle of the land, very keen is thy sight. I have made a request for a mettled steed, 'The price of the spoils of Taliesin.'

Other of Taliesin's songs praise Urien as "the provider of wine, and meal, and mead." The issue of one of his battles is looked to as men would look to the issue of a foray, in abundance "of calves and cows—milch cows and oxen—and all good things also."

*"Urien.*

"We should not be joyful were Urien slain. He terrifies the trembling Saxon, who, with his white hair wet, is carried away on his bier and his forehead bloody. . . . I have wine from the chief; to me wine is most agreeable. Doorkeeper, listen! What noise is that? Is it the earth that shakes, Or is it the sea that swells, Rolling its white head towards thy feet? Is it above the valley? It is Urien who thrusts. Is it above the mountain? It is Urien who conquers. Is it beyond the slope of the hill? It is Urien who wounds. Is it high in anger, It is Urien who shouts. Above the road, above the plain, Above all the defiles, Neither on one side nor two Is there refuge from him. But those shall not suffer hunger Who take spoil in his company, He is the provider of sustenance. With its long blue streamers His spear was the child of death: In slaying his enemies. And until I fall into old age, Into the sad necessity of death, May I never smile If I praise not Urien."

In lines of two or three words each, here run together to save space, I quote from this bard of the sixth century one illustration more of the confessed dependence of the ancient poet upon the favour of a single patron in the warrior-chief, whose praise he lived by singing:—

*"To Urien,*

"In tranquil retirement I was prodigal of song; honour I obtained, and I had abundance of mead, I had abundance of mead for praising him. And fair lands I had in excess, and great feasting, and gold and silver, and gold and gifts, and plenty, and esteem, and gifts to my desire, and a desire to give in my protector. It is a blessing, it is harsh, it is good, it is glorious, it is glorious, it is good, it is a blessing in the presence, the presence of the bestower. The bards of the world are certainly rendering homage to thee according to thy desire. God hath subjected to thee the chiefs of the island, through fear

of thy assault, provoking battle. Protector of the land, usual with thee is headlong activity and the drinking of ale, and ale for drinking, and fair dwelling, and beautiful raiment. On me he has bestowed the estate of Llwyfenydd, and all my requests, three hundred altogether, great and small. The song of Taliesin is a pleasure to thee, the greatest ever heard of; there would be reason for anger if I did not praise thy deeds. And until I become old and in the sad necessity of death, I shall never rejoice except in praising Urien."

The fairy tales of which Taliesin afterwards became the hero, and the mythological poetry ascribed to him, belong to a later chapter in this narrative. We know him here only as one of the bards of the world, who found in Urien a munificent rewarder of their songs, and as the bard of the sixth century, who seems to have been most careful of himself. Another poet of the same period, who gave all to his country, is Llywarch Hen (that is to say, Llywarch the Old), a warrior who sang war, and, suffering with his people, appears by his remains to have excelled chiefly in pathetic lamentation. His poems illustrate with peculiar felicity the manners and feelings of his time; and in a happy incidental touch we learn from him how familiar was the daily contact between life and literature, when he thus pairs, as the two lights of a home, the bard's song and the household fire:

Llywarch  
Hen.

"The hall of Cyndylfann is dark to-night—  
Without fire, without songs."

Llywarch was born about the year 490, and educated in the north of England, among the woods of Argoed, where his father Elidir was sovereign chief. He went when young to the court of Erbin, King of Cornwall and Devon. Traditions of the twelfth century send him to King Arthur's court, and make him for a time King Arthur's minister; for they are the days of Arthurian romance, to which we are now looking back through their contemporary records. There is no touch yet of mediæval fancy to convert them into fairy tale. Llywarch speaks incidentally of Arthur as chief of the Cymry of the south, confederate against the Saxons. What Urien was in the north, Arthur was in the south; and the young Llywarch's friend and patron, Geraint, the son of Erbin, was under King Arthur's orders. Llywarch followed Geraint to the battle in which he fell by the hands of the Saxons; and

of the terrible butchery of that day, thirteen times he repeats in his song that with his own eyes he saw it. Urien afterwards won the young princely warrior bard to his company, and gave him a place of honour in his halls. Llywarch was with Urien as brother in arms at Lindisfarne, where from the year 572 to the year 579 the Northumbrian chief, Theodoric, was besieged, and there again, with his own eyes, he saw the head of Urien struck off by the sword of an assassin. It was Llywarch who carried Urien's head in his mantle from that bloody field.

*"The Death of Urien."*

"I carry by my side," he sings in his chant on the death of Urien—"I carry by my side the head of him who commanded the attack between the two hosts of the son of Kenwarch, who lived great of mind. I carry by my side the head of Urien, who gently commanded the army; on his white breast a black crow. I carry in my mantle the head of Urien, who gently commanded his people; on his white breast the crow battens. I carry in my hand a head that had no rest; corruption eats into the breast of the chief. I carry by the side of my thigh a head that was a buckler for his country, a column in the fight, a war-spear for his free countrymen. I carry by my left side a head better when living than his mead; that was a citadel for the old men. . . . The head that I carry carried me; I shall find it no more; it will come no more to my succour. Woe to my hand, my happiness is lost! The head that I bear from the slope of Pennok has its mouth foaming with blood; woe to Rheged from this day! My arm is not weaker, but my rest is troubled; my heart, will you not break? The head that I carry carried me!"

After Urien's death the power of the Angles overwhelmed Llywarch's small principality of Argoed, and he sought asylum in Wales with Cyndyllann, a Prince of Powys, at his capital of Pengwern (Shrewsbury). Cyndyllann received such exiles with open arms, and maintained constant battle with the Saxons. In battle with the Saxons, fought at Tren (now Tarn), near the Wrekin, Cyndyllann and two other Cymric chiefs fell in the year 580. That is the Cyndyllan whose hall was then made dark, "without fire and without songs." His house was burnt, and his whole family was massacred. The Cymry were now being hunted from the plains, and Llywarch found no better refuge than a hut of boughs on the banks of the Dee, near Bala. He says that he had there but a cow for his companion. His four-and-twenty sons were dead. One of them had in his day rescued from prison Aneurin, who sang, "From the unpleasant prison of earth I am released, from the haunt of death and a hateful

land, by Cenau, the son of Llywarch, magnanimous and bold." But of all Llywarch's sons, Gwenn was the dearest to him, and he was the first who fell under the spears of the Lloegrians. The poet grieves that he is too old and feeble to avenge him. Of Peil, his second son, "a hall," says Llywarch, "could have been built with the splinters of the bucklers he has broken." With melancholy chant the old man passes all too slowly to his grave. He sees in the night the spirit of his mother; doubts whether the God who has not heard his prayers for his sons, now listens to his grief. He turns again to his superstitions. The grey monks of the neighbouring monastery of Llanvor then afflict him. He changes his home to the valley of Aber Kioh, and sits there on the mountain-side longing for death. He calls himself the son of sorrow. But the monks of Llanvor follow him to teach him faith in one who, when on earth, was yet more a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. So at last in the church of their monastery Old Llywarch, Llywarch Hen, was buried. His life was one of patriotic struggle, but the temper of his mind was gentle. In a composition of the tenth century there is attributed to him the courteous precept, "Greet kindly, though there be no acquaintance." In the lament over his sons, after describing the death, at the contest of the ford of Morlas, of his best beloved Gwenn, who was strong and large of stature, the old bard says—

*"Llywarch's Lament for his son Gwenn."*

"Let the wave break noisily; let it cover the shore when the joined lances are in battle. • O Gwenn, woe to him who is too old to avenge you! Let the wave break noisily; let it cover the plain, when the lances join with a shock. O Gwenn, woe to him who is too old, since he has lost you. A man was my son, a hero, a generous warrior, and he was the nephew of Urien. Gwenn has been slain at the ford of Morlas. Here is the bier made for him by his fierce conquered enemy after he had been surrounded on all sides by the army of the Lloegrians; here is the tomb of Gwenn, the son of the Old Llywarch. Sweetly a bird sang on a pear-tree above the head of Gwenn before they covered him with the turf. That broke the heart of the Old Llywarch."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The original and translation into French of the poem from which this passage is taken, and of other poems, will be found, with much valuable information upon the whole subject, in 'Les Bardes Bretons: Poèmes du VI<sup>e</sup> Siècle. Par le Vicomte Hersart de la Villemarqué. Nouvelle Edition.' Paris, 1860.

It is a curious fact that a tumulus called Gorsedd Wen, within 150 yards of the river Morlais (which flows into a lake near Merthyr Tydfil), when opened in 1850, was found to contain the skeleton of a man six feet seven inches high—the place of the tomb, its name, and the stalwart size of the warrior there buried, testifying in favour of the belief that these were the bones of Gwenn, the son of Llywarch.

We will part with this best poet of his time at the blackened and roofless hall of Cyndyllan—in his patrimony of Tren (now Tern Bridge, by Wroxeter)—that he had defended in vain against the ravaging Lloegrians. The whole poem is long; but the following passage from it sufficiently represents

*“Llywarch's Lament for Cyndyllan.”*

“The hall of Cyndyllan is gloomy this night, Without fire, without bed—I must weep awhile and then be silent. The hall of Cyndyllan is gloomy this night, Without fire, without candle—Except God doth, who will endue me with patience? The hall of Cyndyllan is gloomy this night, Without fire, without being lighted—Be thou encircled with spreading silence! The hall of Cyndyllan, gloomy seems its roof, Since the sweet smile of humanity is no more—Woe to him that saw it, if he neglects to do good! The hall of Cyndyllan is without love this night—For he owned it no more—Ah Death! it will be but a short time he will love me! The hall of Cyndyllan is not easy this night, On the top of the mountain, Without its lord, without company, without the circle of the hall—The hall of Cyndyllan is gloomy this night, Without fire, without songs—Tears afflict the cheeks! The hall of Cyndyllan is gloomy this night, Without fire, without family—My overflowing tears gush out! The hall of Cyndyllan pierces me to see it, Roofless, fireless, My chief is dead, and I alive myself! The hall of Cyndyllan is an open waste this night, After being the contented resort of warriors: Elvan, Cyndyllan, and Caeawg. The hall of Cyndyllan is the seat of chill grief this night, After the respect I had; Without the men, without the women who there dwelt! The hall of Cyndyllan is silent this night, After losing its master—The great, merciful God, what shall I do! The hall of Cyndyllan, gloomy seems its roof, Since the Lloegrians have destroyed Cyndyllan and Elvan of Powys.”<sup>1</sup>

The Lloegrians, whose victories were thus lamented by the Cymric bards, were the people of Lloegr, the part of ancient Britain occupied by the Belgæ;<sup>2</sup> but the name now ap-

<sup>1</sup> ‘The Heroic Elegies and other Pieces of Llywarch Hen, Prince of the Cambrian Britons: with a Literal Translation.’ By William Owen. Lond 1792.

<sup>2</sup> Owen’s ‘Llywarch Hen &c.’ Pughe’s ‘Welsh Dictionary,’ *sub voce* Lloegr.

to all England, of which, however, the people have been long called not Lloegrian, but Saxon.

Myrddhin, or Merlin, is another bard of the sixth century; but of the poems attributed to him, none were written in his time.<sup>1</sup> More associated with fable than even Taliesin, the true history of Merlin seems to be that he was born between the years 470 and 480, during the invasion of the Saxon, and took the name of Ambrose, which preceded his surname of Merlin, from the successful leader of the Britons, Ambrosius Aurelianus, who was his first chief, and from whose service he passed, as bard, into that of King Arthur, the southern leader of the Britons. After he had been present in many battles, on one disastrous day, between the years 560 and 574, in a field of horrible slaughter on the Solway Firth, he lost his reason, broke his sword, and forsook human society, finding peace and consolation only in his minstrelsy. He was at last found dead on the bank of a river.<sup>2</sup> Other bards of this period of active struggle were Talhaiarn, Kian, Mengant, and Kywryd. All the powers of the Cymry were knit for decisive strife. Cattle and lands were being won and lost. In the train of a strong chief there was hope of safety, hope of gain. In the arms of a strong chief there was hope of national redemption.

Our recollections of the Cymric bards of the sixth century must close with Aneurin, in whose poem, entitled, 'The Gododin,' the old time of struggle in Strathelyde comes back to us, and we see partly in action the last tumult of the transfer of power in Britain from the spear of the Celt to the plough of the Teuton. But we see in this song of the great strife, when "the men of Gododin went to Cattracth," the tumult, without indication of the strength that was to come of it thereafter. As to Cattracth, the poem tells that it was a day's march from the starting-point of the Gododin, neighbours of the men of

Merlin and other bards of the sixth century.

Aneurin.  
The Gododin.

The Literature of the Kymry: being a Critical Essay on the History of  
<sup>3</sup> Language and Literature of Wales during the Twelfth and two succeeding  
<sup>1</sup> Centuries.' By Thomas Stephens. Llandoverly, 1849.  
<sup>2</sup> passag<sup>2</sup> 'Myrddhinn, ou l'Enchanteur Merlin, son histoire, ses œuvres, son influence.  
 inforce. Par le Vicomte Hersart de la Villemarqué.' Paris, 1862. In this  
 Sièc<sup>2</sup> volume, aiming to be popular, M. de Villemarqué is more credulous than in  
 his former books of the antiquity ascribed to poems of a later date.

rich, Deira and Bernicia, that is to say, Durham and Northumberland. In the adjoining county of York was a Roman town of name Richmond, where an affluent joins the Swale, or four miles from it, was fought the great battle celebrated in and there, perhaps, in." There it may be that the three hundred Aneurin's 'Gododdin' who were at Cattraeth were all slain, except and sixty-three children, the Saxons. The Roman name of Cataractonum, in battle with the British word, now pronounced Catterick, and said to be derived from Cathairrigh, fortified city; or Caer-dar-ich, the camp on the water. The churchyard of the village of Catterick is an ancient camp of unknown origin, and and camp, is with the hills are in the neighbourhood. Aneurin, ancient burial-place, survived it to be killed by Eiddin, son of present in this battle, now of an axe, according to the Cymric Einigan, with the three accursed deeds of Britain." In the Triads, one of "the three John Williams ab Ithel," by whom the opinion of the Rev. edited and translated, Cattraeth is identified. 'Gododin' has been 'Bridge, but with the Catrail, or rampart tical, not with Catterick, as Teviotdale, for five-and-forty miles from and fosse extending across Peel-fell in the Cheviots. This was a Galashiels, southward, the further progress of the Saxons west-rampart raised to check was here, the word Cattraeth may possibly mean cad-traeth, the war-tract; or cad-rhaith, the legal war-fence. But I have little doubt that the true site of Catterick.

When, in the year 54<sup>da</sup>, (Saxons combatant already with the forty ships, in aid of the Godin, Deivyr, and Bryneach (Deira Cymry, the people of Gornern shore, bordering on Llywarch and Bernicia), on the east are especially liable to depredation, Hen's district of Argoed, with the power of the Saxon. and most probably already

1 Stephens's 'Literature of the Battle of Cattraeth, by Aneurin, a Was  
2 'Y Gododin: a Poem on the English Translation and numerously  
Bard of the Sixth Century, with the Rev. John Williams ab Ith, al-  
tical and Critical Annotations. B. Shire.' Llandovery, 1852. The iden-  
of Y Gododin ddyw. Merioneth.



At the call of Mynyddawg, Lord of Eiddin, Cymric chiefs formed an alliance, brought their forces to Eiddin, and were sumptuously entertained. Eiddin is commonly identified with Edinburgh. If so, we must look for Cattraeth to the Catrail. Nobody, I believe, has suggested, obvious as it seems, that the lands of the Lord of Eiddin were on Wordsworth's "life's neighbour," the river Eden, "whose bold rocks are worthy of their fame." The Eden, passing through Westmoreland and Cumberland, flows towards the north-east into the Solway Frith, and has its source on the opposite side of the same hills from which the Swale rises to flow by Catterick to the south-west. The sources of the Eden and the Swale are only two or three miles distant from each other; and, if that be the sort of Eiddin that was the gathering-point of the Cymric host, it was among the fells near the head-waters of the river, it was but a march for the heroes of some five-and-twenty miles from thence through Swaledale to Cattraeth. The host was large. The larger army of the Saxons gathered in Gododin, and marched westward to meet at Cattraeth the Britons of the yet unconquered West. The fight began on a Tuesday, and, like one of the great battles of the American Civil War, was maintained for a week, the last four days being most bloody. Aneurin was himself made prisoner in a panic of the men, with whom he fought, and afterwards forcibly liberated by a son of Lothar, Heng. After this, at a conference during the struggle, Aneurin, as bard and herald, demanded restoration of a part of Gododin as the condition of peace. The Saxon herald answered him by killing the bard Owain, and the battle was renewed by the Cymry, and maintained so doggedly that of their thousand and sixty-three chiefs only three, Cynon, and Cadwallo, and Cadlew of Cadnant, survived with Aneurin. Allusion is made to protection of corn indicate that the great fight was in the harvest season, and the date usually assigned to it is the year 570. Aneurin's poem of 'The Gododin,' as it remains to us, consists of ninety-seven stanzas; and combines with the story of the battle, praise of the Cymric chiefs. It is considered that in the whole of the poem every chief had his eulogy; and that various detached fragments detached from this old wall over the death of

Cymric heroes upon whom the Saxon set his heel. But we must advance now to a more thorough perception of the sense and spirit of

*The Gododin.*<sup>1</sup>

The poem opens with a celebration of the hero Owen, who is commonly identified with Owen, son of Urien, although he is called here the only son of Marro.

"He was a man in mind, in years a youth, And gallant in the din of war; Fleet, thick-maned chargers Were ridden by the illustrious hero; A shield, light and broad, Hung on the flank of his swift and slender steed; His sword was blue and gleaming, His spurs were of gold, his raiment was woollen. . . . Thou hast gone to a bloody bier, Sooner than to a nuptial feast! Thou hast become a meal for ravens, Ere thou didst reach the front of conflict! Alas, Owain! my beloved friend; It is not meet that he should be devoured by ravens! There is swelling sorrow in the plain, Where fell in death the only son of Marro. Adorned with his wreath, leader of rustic warriors, whenever he came Unattended by his troop, he would serve the mead before maidens. But the front of his shield would be pierced, if ever he heard The shout of war. No quarter would he give to those whom he pursued; Nor would he retreat from the combat until blood flowed; And he cut down like rushes the men who would not yield. The Gododin relates, that on the coast of Mordei, Before the tents of Madog, when he returned, But one man in a hundred came with him."

With Madog from the coast of Mordei (which might by chance be Moricambe estuary, like the estuary of the Eden, in the Solway Frith), came, adorned also with his wreath, Manawyd, his country's rod of power, who darted like an eagle to our harbour when induced to join in the confederation. There came also adorned with a wreath the son of Isgyran, "the wondrous the holme, amber beads in ringlets encircled his temples; precious as the amber, worth a banquet of wine." There was Hyveidd Hir, the old poet in each case paints the character and gives the praise before he adds the name as climax to his eulogy.—There was Hyveidd Hir, the son of Bleiddar Sant of Glamörgan, leader of the advanced guard that swept down five battalions of the men from the coasts of Deivyr and Bryneich (Durham and Northumberland). But he himself was wounded early in the fight. "He had not raised the spear ere his blood streamed to the ground." "The heroes marched to Gododin,"—two stanzas open thus before the form of opening is changed to "The heroes marched to Cattraeth." The march was meant doubtless for an invasion of the Angles in Gododin, and it appears from the poem that the Cymry sought recovery of territory. The enemy advanced to

<sup>1</sup> In quotations I have adopted the translation of the Rev. John Williams ab Ithel, occasionally preferring a reading that he gives in a note, or slightly altering the manner of his English. In the analysis, I have discarded altogether his confusing interpretations of local names, and, accepting the identification of Cattraeth with Catterick, have made out in my own way its consistency with other parts of the geography of the Gododin.

meet them, and the hosts joined battle at Cattraeth. The inland region immediately behind the coasts of the Deivyr and Bryneich Romanised as the Otadini, was occupied by a people called by the Romans Gadeni; but I do not doubt that the Roman name Otadin is itself the Latinised Ododin; Ododin, without the prefix of an unessential G, being the Cymric name given in the text of the MS. to the region upon which the British heroes marched. Ododin was not a third district, but as in Roman geography, which always was founded on the native, a common name for the region occupied by the men of Deivyr and Bryneich. This theory accounts also reasonably for the title of the poem, which otherwise would seem to have been named for no obvious reason after a tribe representing but a section of the enemy.—The heroes marched to Gododin. Sognaw and Gwanar exulted. They should have gone to churches to do penance, the old and the young, the bold and the mighty; the inevitable strife of death was about to pierce them.

“The heroes marched to Cattraeth, loquacious was the host; Blue mead was their liquor, and it proved their poison; In marshalled array they cut through the engines of war; And after the joyful cry, silence ensued! They should have gone to churches to perform penance; The inevitable strife of death was about to pierce them. The heroes marched to Cattraeth, filled with mead and drunk, Compact and vigorous; I should wrong them were I to neglect their fame; Around the mighty, red, and murky blades, Obstinate and fiercely the dogs of war would fight.”

The son of the bard Kian was there. It seems that he had married the daughter of a chief of Ododin, refusing dowry with her because he was arrayed in arms against her father. But this ninth stanza of the Gododin, in which the death of the son of Kian is celebrated, joined to a later stanza, the twenty-first, has been translated by Gray with a different interpretation in his Ode from the Welsh, “the Death of Hoel.”

“The heroes marched to Cattraeth with the dawn; Their peace was disturbed by those who feared them; A hundred thousand with three hundred engaged in mutual overthrow; Drenched in gore, they marked the fall of the lances; The post of war was most manfully and with gallantry maintained, Before the retinue of Mynyddawg the Courteous. The heroes marched to Cattraeth with the dawn; Feelingly did their home friends regret their absence; Mead they drank, yellow, sweet, ensnaring; That year is the point to which many a minstrel turns; Redder were their swords than their plumes, Their blades were white as lime; and into four parts were their helmets cloven, Even those of the retinue of Mynyddawg the Courteous.”

Gelorwydd, the gem of Baptism, was slain and mocked by the enemy; extreme unction being administered to him, with his own blood for the oil. Tudvwilch Hir, the son of Kilydd (who is elsewhere called the son of Prince Kelyddon, and was therefore a Strathclyde Briton from the woods of Celadon), Tudvwilch, deprived of his lands and towns, marched with a blazoned standard and strong following, he boasted that he would scatter abroad the mounted ravagers. He slaughtered the Saxons for seven days, and in the last day of the fight became their prisoner. His valour should have kept him a free man; his memory is cherished by his

fair companions." Erthai was there also, before whom even an army groaned. "In the van was, loud as thunder, the din of targets. . . When the tale shall be told of the battle of Cattraeth, the people will utter sighs; long has been their grief because of the warrior's absence; there will be a dominion without a sovereign and a smoking land." Godebog was carried to the grave by his sons. Tudwlch and Cyvwlch the Tall drank the bright mead together by the light of torches; though pleasant to the taste, a fatal foe. Gwarthleo was of the number, young, rich, ever pressing forward, and there too was the gigantic Gwrueling. In the early dawn bright was the horn in the hall of Eiddin, pompous the feast of mead at the meeting of reapers. Men drank transparent wine with battle-daring purpose. The reapers sang of war, war with the shining wing; the minstrels sang of war, of harnessed war, of winged war.

There were three forward chiefs of the Novantæ—that is to say from the opposite shore of Solway Frith, the Novantæ being the people of Wigtown, Kirkcudbright, and Ayr—with five battalions of five hundred men each, three levies each of three hundred knights from Eiddin, or the banks and estuary of the Eden. Three chiefs from Breitan, on the shores of Clyde; three from Aeron, which is probably an old form of the name of Ayr. These then completed the list of the confederate Cymric tribes on the west coast of the Cymry, from the Frith of Clyde to Solway Frith, whose chiefs crossing the Solway went up the river Eden, or else marched by land through Strathclyde to the appointed gathering place in Cumberland.

"The heroes who marched to Cattraeth were renowned, Wine and mead out of golden goblets was their beverage, That year was to them one of high solemnity, Three hundred and sixty-three chieftains, wearing the golden torques; Of those who hurried forth after the excess of revelling, But three escaped by valour from the funeral fosse, The two war-dogs of Aeron, and Cynon the dauntless, And myself, from the spilling of blood, the reward of my pure song."

The preceding passage has been thus translated by Gray into English verse, as the second half of his Ode from the Welsh, "The Death of Hoel."

"To Cattraeth's vale in glittering row

Twice two hundred warriors go;

Every warrior's manly neck

Chains of regal honour deck,

Wreathed in many a golden link :

From the golden cup they drink

Nectar, that the bees produce,

Or the grape's ecstatic juice.

Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn :

But none from Cattraeth's vale return,

Save Aëron brave, and Conan strong

(Bursting through the bloody throng),

And I, the meanest of them all,

That live to weep, and sing their fall."

Motionless is the sword of Graid, the son of Hoewgi. The armour of Bleiddvan, the son of Bleiddvan the Bold, has been thoroughly washed in

his gore. The bards at the Christmas feasts never quitted the court of Gwenabwy, the son of Gwen; "he was a mighty and fierce dragon, his land should not be ploughed though it might become wild." Swift and fierce to destroy the enemy with fire and sword was Marchten; "he would slaughter with the blade, whilst his arms were full of furze." The son of Gwddnen came from the south, having taken a strong town, "along the rampart to Offer, even to the point of Madden, there was no young offspring that he cut not to pieces, no aged man that he did not scatter about. His sword resounded on the heads of mothers; he was an ardent spirit, praise be to him." The Gododin would not be completely true without this touch in it of the ancient barbarism of war.

"When Caradawg rushed into battle, It was like the tearing onset of the woodland boar; Bull of the army in the mangling fight, He allured the wild dogs by the action of his hand; My witnesses are Owain the son of Eulat, And Gwrien, and Gwynn, and Gwriad; But from Cattraeth, and its work of carnage, From the hill of Hydwn, ere it was gained, After the clear mead was put into his hand, He saw no more the hill of his father. The warriors marched with speed, together they bounded onward; Short lived were they,—they had become drunk over the distilled mead. The retinue of Mynyddawg, renowned in the hour of need; Their life was the price of their banquet of mead. Caradawg, and Madawg, Pyll, and Ieuan, Gwgawn, and Gwiawn, Gwynn and Cynvan, Peredur with steel arms, Gwawrddur, and Aeddan; A defence were they in the tumult, though with shattered shields; When they were slain, they also slaughtered; Not one to his native home returned."

One chief of Ododin, Gwlygot, joined in the banquet of Mynyddawg, and went to his death at Cattraeth with the Cymry. "In marshalled array they went with shout of war, with powerful steeds and dark-brown harness, with shields, with uplifted javelins and piercing lances, with glittering mail and with swords." Morien fell in attack on the Saxon camp as he carried and spread fire, and as his sword resounded on the summit he was killed by a stone hurled from the wall of the fort. But the fort was taken. Terrible within it was the cry of the timid multitude; the van of the army of Gododin was scattered. Another fierce attack was made; a dwarf messenger of the Saxons hastened to the fence; the Cymry sent forward to meet him their chief counsellor, a hoary-headed man, mounted upon a piebald steed and wearing the golden chain. The dwarf proposed a compact, but the Cymry answered for themselves with a great shout, "Let heaven be our protection. Let his compact be death by the spear in battle." For this was a life-struggle in which even women of the Cymry fought among the men.

"Equal to three men, though a maid, was Bradwen; Equal to twelve was Gwenabwy, the son of Gwen. For the piercing of the skilful and most learned woman, Her servant bore a shield in the action, And with energy his sword fell upon the heads of the foe; In Lloegyr the churls cut their way before the chieftain. He who grasps the mane of a wolf, without a club in his hand, will have it gorgeously emblazoned on his robe. In the engagement of wrath and carnage, Bradwen perished,—she did not escape. Carcases of gold-mailed warriors lay upon the city walls; None of the houses or cities of Christians

was any longer actively engaged in war; But one feeble man, with his shouts, kept aloof The roving birds; . . . . My limbs are racked, And I am loaded, In the subterraneous house; An iron chain Passes over my two knees; Yet of the mead and of the horn, And of the host of Cattracth, I Aneurin will sing What is known to Taliesin, Who communicates to me his thoughts, Or a strain of Gododin, Before the dawn of the bright day. The chief exploit of the North was accomplished by the hero, Of a gentle breast; a more liberal lord could not be seen; Earth does not support, nor has mother borne So illustrious and powerful a steel-clad warrior! By the force of his gleaming sword he protected me, From the cruel underground prison he brought me out, From the chamber of death, from the enemy's country; Such was Cencu, son of Llywarch, energetic and bold."

The tide of battle turned against the Cymry. They were forced to consider terms of agreement. The demand made of the dales beyond the ridge of Eesyd (perhaps Eathwaite Lake), the stabbing of Aneurin's companion by the Saxon herald, and the uprising of the Cymry to pursue the traitor, are the next incidents told.

"Together arise the expert warriors, And pursue the stranger, the man with the crimson robe; The encampment is broken down by the ~~stout~~ pilgrim, Where the young deer" (collected as provisions for the ~~re~~ in full melody. Amongst the spears of Brych thou couldst see no rods (white flags); With the base the worthy can have no concord; Morial in pursuit will not countenance their dishonourable deeds, With his steel blade ready for bloodshed. Together arise the confederate warriors. Strangers to the country, their deeds shall be proclaimed; There was slaughtering with axes and blades, And there was raising large cairns over the heroes of toil. The warriors arose, met together, And all with one accord sallied forth; Short were their lives, long is the grief of those who loved them; Seven times their number of Lloegrians had they slain; After the conflict their wives raised a scream; And many a mother has the tear on her eyelash. . . . The soldiers celebrated the praise of the Holy One, And in their presence was kindled a fire that raged on high. On Tuesday they put on their dark-brown garments; On Wednesday they purified their enamelled armour; On Thursday their destruction was certain; On Friday was brought carnage all around; On Saturday their joint labour was useless; On Sunday their blades assumed a ruddy hue; On Monday was seen a pool knee-deep of blood. The Gododin relates that after the toil, Before the tents of Madog, when he returned, Only one man in a hundred with him came."

At Catterick a tributary river flows into the Swale; and the next incident of the Gododin is that "at early dawn there was a battle at the confluence of rivers," where a fire was kindled in front of the fence, and the dwarf herald seems to have been killed treacherously in revenge for the treacherous slaying of Aneurin's companion by the Saxon herald. The rest is still celebration at length of the deeds of slaughtered chiefs, the last named being Morien and Gwcnabwy.

"And Morien lifted up again his ancient lance, And, roaring, stretched out death Towards the warriors, the Gwyddyl, and the Prydyn; Whilst towards

the lovely, slender, blood-stained body of Gwen, Sighed Gwenabwy, the only son of Gwen. Because of the wound of the skilful and most wise warrior Grievous and deep, when he fell prostrate upon the ground, The banner was pompously unfurled, and borne by a man at his side; A wild scene was beheld in Eiddin, and upon the battle-field. The grasp of his hand performed deeds of valour Upon the Cynt, the Gwyddyl, and the Prydyn. He who meddles with the mane of a wolf, without a club In his hand, will have it gorgeously emblazoned on his robe. Fain would I sing,—<sup>c</sup>would that Morien had not died.' I sigh for Gwenabwy, the son of Gwen."

So closes, with a sigh, the song of Aneurin. Chief after chief he has marshalled in his pride of life and flush of valour, only to weep for his death in the day when "there was slaughtering with axes and blades, and there was raising large cairns over the heroes of toil." Llywarch urged all his sons to battle for their country, and afterwards a childless old man he mourned them all with Gwenn, the dearest, who fell by the ford at Morlas; "all slain," he wails, "by my words," for it was he who, as voice of his country, urged them to the fields of death. It was another Gwen who fell in the deadly and disastrous struggle at Cattraeth, and over whose "lovely, slender, blood-stained body," knelt Gwenabwy, his only son—"I sigh for Gwenabwy, the son of Gwen." Merlin, scared by the horrors of the struggle, passed at last from a wild battle-field, with the light of his reason quenched in blood, to die a homeless wanderer upon a lonely river-bank. The chiefs of the Cymry may have been too ready to "quaff the white mead on serene nights," or on the eve of battles they may have been plagues to each other with disputes, forays, and petty discord; it may be that among the men of Deivyr and Bryneich, on the eastern coast, north and south of the Humber, there were Cymry, subject to the coast-ravaging Saxons, who fought with the invaders against their own countrymen; and the peculiar bitterness with which Cymric poets speak always of the Bryneich is thought to support this opinion; but the best mind of the Cymry, as expressed by their poets, had in these grievous times assuredly the strongest influence. The seven days' battle at Cattraeth, where the Strathclyde Britons gathered their forces for a last fierce stand, and stood firm to the death, bore witness to the spirit of a generation that makes poets. Urien, chief of the confederates among the hills of our Cymryland of the North—a land stretching hither—

of Cumberland and Northumberland into the Scottish lowlands—had many great successes in his day. When Taliesin first sang in his halls, the struggle had not become hopeless; but Taliesin also lived and sang in the last terrible days, when war was without hope, but all the mind of the Cymry, spoken by their poets, was bent upon worthy maintenance of the disastrous strife, and Urien's camp became the centre of the nation's songs. The halls of other chiefs are visited by the bards, and named with honour. Thus we hear now and then of Arthur, who, at the head of a south-western confederacy, finally maintained ground for the Cymry amongst the hills west of the Exe, where they were the chief occupants of the five south-western counties in King Alfred's time.<sup>1</sup> Arthur, of whom there is only slight contemporary record extant, became, for reasons that will afterwards appear, the British hero of tradition. But before the Cymry of his own day, Urien was the chief warrior. In a former page it has been said that, by immigration and invasion, the Germanic races, of whose literature we shall have next to speak, had been for centuries establishing themselves upon the cultivable lands of Britain. Even now there is to be found no trace of a sweeping repulse of the whole Celtic population into Wales. In Wales the Cymry held their own to the last, and thither many probably withdrew from the dominion of the Saxon. But in Athelstane's time Britons and Saxons divided equal rule in Exeter; and to this day in the north of England, as in the south-west, the lineage of the short, dark, broad-chested Celt, is visibly intermixed with the type of the tall, fair-haired Germanic people. Bede, writing a century and a half after the battle of Cattaeth, speaks of the Britons of Northumberland, who were in his day partly free and partly subject to the Angles.

The verse system of the Celts was founded not like that of the Greeks and Romans upon length and shortness of syllables, but upon agreements in the sounds of initial and final letters. The old Teutonic verse, as we shall find in the case of Anglo-Saxon, was based upon alliteration of initials only. The Gaelic and Cymric Celts used agreement not only of final consonants, the most simple and ancient form of final assonance, but also of final syllables. The Cymric verse might close

Celtic  
Metres.



two, three, or even six or more successive lines with the same syllable. In Gaelic also the same system was followed, but with more license in the variation of the vowel, while the consonant remained unchanged. In this assonance, by repetition of the final syllable, we have the germ of rhyme. It is no more true rhyme than would be the association of 'ship' with 'hardship' and 'worship.' The Gaels used often a two-syllabled, as *sóire*, *dóire* (health and misery), sometimes even a three-syllabled, assonance, as *sóinmiche*, *dóinmiche*; that of the Cymry was almost always one-syllabled; and while the Cymry depended chiefly for effect upon the assonant ends of their lines, the Gaels cared more for assonant initial letters, for alliteration. The Gaels also were more careful than the Cymry to balance with a rhythmical antithesis the two halves of a verse. There was peculiar again to the Gaelic poetry what Dr. Zeuss, whose Celtic Grammar is the best authority upon this subject, calls a half-*assonance*, where, the vowel being the same, the consonants were only those of the same class. No distinct rule was kept as to the length of lines, but they were short, and seven—the measure of Gray's partly imitative 'Death of Hoel, from the Welsh'<sup>1</sup>—was very commonly the number of their syllables.

The chief MS. materials for a study of the old Cymric language and literature are,—

LATIN MSS. OF THE 8TH OR 9TH CENTURIES WITH CYMRIC GLOSSES.

1. The *Oxford Codex* in the Bodleian Library (Auct. F. 4-32), containing a portion of the treatise of Euty chius the grammarian, with interlinear Cymric glosses. The Exordium of Ovid's Art of Love, with Cymric interlinear glosses from v. 31 to 370. An alphabet ascribed to Nemnivus, with letters resembling what are printed as Bardic Letters, but of different signification, and a fragment of a treatise on Weights and Measures, partly in British, partly in Latin. These Cymric remains are of the end of the 8th or beginning of the 9th century.

2. The *Second Oxford Codex*, also in the Bodleian, is theological, and contains in the middle, from p. 41 to p. 47*b*, a vocabulary of Latin words, with British interpretations written over or under them. The Cymric is of ancient form, and the following Latin entry shows that it was written when the Cymry were resisting their invaders:—"Humilibus Deus dat gratiam et victoriam. Clades magna facta est, de Saxonibus percussi sunt multi, de Britonibus autem rari."

3. The *Lichfield*, formerly Llandaff, *Codex*, or *St. Chad's Book*, contains Latin entries of donations, &c., with many words and sentences in Cymric of the beginning of the 9th century.

4. Of the same age is a leaf with Cymric glosses, found by Monius, attached to the cover of a codex in the Luxemburg Library.

5. A MS. of the Gospels paraphrased by *Juvenus*, in Latin hexameters, contains Cymric glosses, also some verses at pp. 48, 49, 50. The MS., of the 8th or 9th century, is in the University Library at Cambridge (Ff. 4, 42).

#### ANNALS AND OTHER LITERATURE.

##### . 10TH CENTURY.

The *Laws of Howel Dda*, compiled in the 10th century. The oldest MS. is of the 12th.

##### 12TH CENTURY :—

The *Liber Landavensis*, or Book of Teilo, ancient Chartulary of Llandaff Cathedral, published from MSS. in the libraries of Hengwrt and of Jesus College, Oxford, by the Welsh MSS. Society, compiled early in the 12th century.

VELLUM MS. OF THE GODODIN, apparently of the year 1200, in possession of Mrs. E. Powell, of Abergavenny.

The *Black Book of Caermarthen*, in the library of Hengwrt, a 4to of 54 leaves, contains in the early part an elegy on the death of Howel Dda's grandson in 1104, and later, an elegy on the death of a Prince of Powys in 1158. This book includes the song of the Sons of Llywarch Hen, &c.

##### 14TH CENTURY :—

The *Llyfr Coch*, or *Red Book of Hergest*, in the library of Jesus College, Oxford, a folio of 721 pp. in double columns. At p. 208 is a Brief Chronology from Adam to A.D. 1318. At p. 499, a Chronological History of the Saxons to A.D. 1376. In this volume are the oldest known copies of most of the poems ascribed to Taliesin and Llywarch Hen, beginning at p. 513, and therefore written after the year 1376.

##### OF VARIOUS DATES.

A collection of MSS. formed by Mr. Owen Jones, a furrier in Thames Street, at his own great expense. The contents of many of them were published in 1801, and subsequent years, in three volumes, as the *Myvyrian Archaeology of Wales*, giving in part the pith of Welsh literature from the 6th century to the opening of the 15th. Mr. Owen Jones was assisted in the publication by Edward Williams, of Glamorgan (otherwise Iolo Morganwg), and Dr. Owen Pughe. The first volume is a collection of 124 pieces of ancient Cymric Poetry, of which 77 are ascribed to Taliesin; the second and third volumes are in prose, and include the Laws of Howel Dda, the Triads, Proverbs, Genealogies of Saints, Chronicles of Tysilio and Gruffyd ab Arthur. The poetry is arranged in two parts: 1, works of the Cynveirdd, or earliest, 2, works of the Gogynveirdd, or Bards of the Middle Ages. Besides these published pieces, the unpublished material of the Myvyrian MSS. alone, deposited in the British Museum contain 4700 pieces of poetry in 16,000 pages, and 15,300 pages of prose, forming of prose and verse 100 volumes. The *Iolo MSS.*, or a selection from the collection made for continuation of the *Myvyrian Archaeology* by Iolo Morganwg, were published by the Welsh MS. Society founded in 1837.

## CHAPTER IV.

GILDAS, the historian, by Anglo-Saxons called the Wise, is said to have been a Strathclyde Briton of the sixth century, a fellow-pupil of Llywarch, and a brother of Aneurin, if not Aneurin himself. Born in or soon before the beginning of the century, he was taught first by St. Illtud, and then studied for seven years in Gaul, before he dwelt near the present St. David's Head, on the coast of Pembrokeshire, and himself became a teacher. He went to Erin, and there founded monasteries among the Irish Gaels. After his return to Britain he proceeded to Rome, and on his way back when in Brittany founded the Monastery of St. Gildas de Ruys, where its monks say that he ended his life. Others say that he came again to England, and died in an oratory near Glastonbury.

To the Gildas of whose life these details are usually given<sup>1</sup> is ascribed a very ancient history, written in monastic Latin, '*De Calamitate, Excidio, et Conquestu Britanniae*;' or, as the text itself enlarges on the title, "about the situation of Britain, her disobedience and subjection, her rebellion, second subjection and dreadful slavery; of her religion, persecution, holy martyrs, heresies of different kinds; of her tyrants, her two hostile and ravaging nations; of her first devastation, her defence, her second devastation and second taking vengeance; of her third devastation, of her famine, and the letters to Aetius; of her victory and her crimes; of the sudden rumour of enemies; of her famous pestilence; of her counsels; of her last enemy, far more cruel than the first; of the subversion of her cities and of the remnant that escaped; and finally, of the peace which, by the will of God, has been granted her in these our times." The history is very ancient, but most assuredly it was not written by a man who had in his veins the blood of Aneurin. Assuming to

be one of themselves, this priest uses a tone towards the Cymry of contemptuous hostility, under the cloak of pastoral and brotherly reproof. "They are impotent," says the covert assailant, "in following the standard of peace and truth, but bold in wickedness and falsehood. . . . Britain has kings, but they are tyrants; she has judges, but unrighteous ones, generally engaged in plunder and rapine, but always preying on the innocent; whenever they exert themselves to avenge or protect, it is sure to be in favour of robbers and criminals; . . . they are ever ready to take oaths, and as often perjure themselves; they make a vow, and almost immediately act falsely; they make war, but their wars are against their countrymen, and unjust ones." This could not have been said by a Strathelyde Briton in or near the days of the battle of Cattraeth; but it might well be said, as Mr. Thomas Wright<sup>1</sup> considers that it was said, by an Anglo-Saxon monk of the seventh century, who gave force to his censure by writing as one who must tell the bitter truth to his own people.

Through the equivocal Gildas, then, we pass from the Cymry to the Anglo-Saxons. Who were they? Something has been already said of their strong affinity to the Frisians, The Anglo-Saxon settlements. and of their probable relation to the Belgæ, who were on our southern coast in Caesar's time. We have cited also the six recorded settlements between the years 449 and 547, first one of Jutes, then three of Saxons, and then two of Angles. Regarding these six settlements as mainly representative of the period and character of Anglo-Saxon conquest and colonisation, we have next to ask, what is meant by the distinction between Jutes, Saxons, and Angles?

That there were such settlements we learn, on the authority of Venerable Bede, and of the Saxon Chronicle, which herein follows Bede. The statements of Bede correspond also to the brief narrative in the history of Gildas, written professedly seventeen, and at latest a hundred, years after Ida landed on our

<sup>1</sup> 'Biographia Britannica Literaria; or, Biography of Literary Characters of Great Britain and Ireland, arranged in Chronological Order. Anglo-Saxon Period.' London, 1842.—From this book and the companion-volume for the Anglo-Norman Period the student of English will obtain some serviceable information.

north-east coasts. Bede, born in 673, was studying history in a Northumbrian monastery, only a century and a half after the landing of Ida. The information upon which he wrote was the best he could gather, chiefly by inquiry among his neighbours the monks in the North of England; but also by collecting record and local tradition from the monasteries of the South, and consulting, in fact, every accessible record. To the best of the belief of his own day, he tells us the manner of establishing the Anglo-Saxon power in this country. Of the Saxon Chronicle the part relating to this early period was probably not put together till King Alfred's time, two centuries later than Bede. Use was then made of the existing records, the 'Ecclesiastical History' of Bede being among the number. In fact, then, the account of the six settlements remains to us upon Bede's single and safe testimony to the record or tradition extant in his own day.

Now, as to the first settlement of Jutes under Hengist and  
Jutes.
Horsa (Horse and Mare), who established themselves in Kent, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight, and whom Bede distinctly believed to have come from Jutland,<sup>1</sup> it is to be observed that Jutland is now occupied by Danes, and that men from Jutland settling on our eastern coasts in the days of the Angles were called Danes; but that in this case they are called "Jutes," not "Danes," and do not seem to have been Danish. Where there has been a Danish settlement, towns commonly are found with names ending in 'by.' Thus in Lincolnshire, within a dozen miles of Great Grimsby, there stand Foresby, Utterby, Fotherby, Ashby-cum-Fenby, Barnoldby, Irby, Laceby, Keelby, Grasby, Brocklesby, Ulceby. Yet throughout this "Jute" region of Kent, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight, there is not even one place to be found that has a name ending in 'by.' There is no clear ground for asserting, although it has been suggested as one way of conquering this

<sup>1</sup> The statement of Bede is as follows:—"De Jutarum Origine sunt Cantuarii et Vectuarii, hoc est ea gens, quæ usque hodie in provincia Occidentali Saxonum Jutarum natio nominatur, posita contra ipsam insulam Vectam, . . . Porro de Anglis hoc est illa patria, quæ Angulus dicitur et ab eo tempore usque hodie manere desertus inter provincias Jutarum et Saxonum perhibetur."—*Ecc. Hist.*, i. 15.

difficulty, that a Germanic people occupied Jutland in the middle of the fifth century. But that our invaders of A.D. 449 (or as Bede's context shows 450), called the Jutes, were Danes from Jutland, is not only against local evidence; it is also against fair likelihood that the first ships from Jutland to this country, instead of crossing the North Sea, as they afterwards did, and striking on our eastern coast, should have taken the trouble to make a long voyage southward, and land nowhere until they got to Pegwell Bay, where a farmhouse, bearing the name of Ebbsfleet, now shows where the old port used to be. The Saxon Chronicle adopts the *usque hodie* of Bede, in testifying to "that tribe amongst the West Saxons which is yet called the Jute-kin." Again, in the Anglo-Saxon poem of Beowulf, presently to be discussed, as well as in the fragment on the battle of Finnesburgh, Hengist appears as the name of a Jute hero. It is noticeable also that with the neighbouring regions named Essex, Sussex, and Wessex, after the Saxons of the East, and South, and West, Kent kept its British name, and had a peculiar division into six nearly equal lathes, instead of the usual hundreds of the Anglo-Saxon shires; while it has been pointed out that by Jutish law a military expedition is still called a lething, or in Danish lelling (leading). On the other hand, in support of the opinion that this first settlement was not of Jutes from Jutland, but of Goths from Gaul, Dr. R. G. Latham observes that King Alfred, in translating Bede's 'Ecclesiastical History,' has dealt with Bede's recorded conquest by the three strongest of the invading peoples, "Saxonibus, Anglis, Jutis," as "that of Saxum and of Angle, and of Geatūm" and of the Geats; while the King, in whose reign the Saxon Chronicle appears to have been established, also dropped out of his version of Bede, the reference to a people "yet called" Jute. Again, it is observed that Bede connects the name of the people of the Isle of Wight—Wiht-wære, *Vect-varia*—with Jutæ, as King Alfred in his day connected it with Geat. But the error here is certain; the name being a British name, known to the Romans, and current in South Britain long before anything had been heard of Hengist and Horsa. In the Life of King Alfred ascribed to his Bishop Asser, Alfred himself is made by inference a Jute, his grandfather being Oslac, "a Goth by nation,

for he was born of the Goths and Jutes; that is to say, of the race of Stuf and Wiltgar, and being made Governor of the Isle of Wight, killed in Gwitigaraburgh (Carisbrooke), their last stronghold in the island, the few native Cymry who were not already slain or exiled." Dr. Latham dwells upon this phrase "Goth and Jute," and upon Alfred's rendering of Jute by Geat, when he argues that the "Jutes" of the first settlement were, in fact, Goths; or that, if Jutes, they were Jutes who came in company with Goths, and that they came, not out of Jutland, but only from the coast of Gaul, across the straits that divide Gaul from Britain. Thus, he argues, we may have in the names of the two Kings of Wessex, Cyneric and Cwichelm, the Goths Hunneric (Heinrich) and Wilhelm. He observes that according to this theory we have still in Kent a people that is not Saxon, to preserve the ancient name of that part of the land; and that the division into Lathes may be accounted for, since Zeuss has pointed to the Lete or Lœte, who, according to the 'Notitia Utriusque Imperii,' were transplanted by the Romans in military divisions of Franks, Teutons, Batavians, and others, into Celtic Gaul. There were Lœts from the Batavians and Suevi, in the days of the 'Notitia,' stationed at Bayeux; and Zeuss adds to the citation of these military companies or colonies the statement of the Theodosian Code (A.D. 438), "that the lands appointed to the Lœti who were removed to them, were called *Terræ Lœticae*." The Lathes of Kent may, therefore, have been "*Terræ Lœticae*" held by Germanic or Gothic military colonies from Gaul.

But while the first of the six settlements is said to have been of Jutes, the next three are said to have been of Saxons, who established Saxon power in the south; and the last two of Angles, in the north of England and the Scottish lowlands. Who were the Saxons and the Angles? The distinction of nation between these invaders of the South and of the North still rests on the authority of Bede, who believed that the Angles came from a land called Angle; in his Latin, *Angulus*; lying between the countries of the Jutes and Saxon. The region to which Bede here pointed is still to be found in a corner of land called Angeln, in Slesvig, which lies a little to the north of the harbour of Kiel. It forms the southern coast at the mouth of

Angles.

Flensburg Fiord, includes the projection of land, thence to the mouths of the inlet of the Slie or Schley, which runs inland to the town of Schleswig; and if we reckon in it the marshes on the other side of the Slie mouths, we have a district measuring at most twenty miles by ten, which even at this day supports but half-a-dozen villages or towns. It contained thick woods, and was in Bede's time known to be desolate. But then the belief was that it had been depopulated by migration of the Angles to this country. Again, this Angulus is on the eastern, not the western coast; so that if their district be confined within Bede's definition of it, the Angles when they came to Britain either began their migration over land, or had to sail out of the Baltic, and come round Denmark on their way. The distance, however, is but five-and-twenty miles from the head of the Slie to the west coast. The whole breadth of land from the mouth of the Flensburg Fiord to the shore of the North Sea is only forty miles; and on that opposite shore, among the Frisian population north of Leek, another little district bears yet to this day the name of Angeln. If they were in Slesvig the same Angles who proved so busy and so strong when they reached Britain, we may be quite sure that in Slesvig they occupied the whole breadth of the land from coast to coast. North of the Angles, as thus placed, were the Jutes; and to the south, between them and the Elbe, that is to say, in modern Holstein, were the Saxons; Denmark Proper in a slight measure, and Slesvig and Holstein almost entirely, being, according to this view, the parent country of the Anglo-Saxon race.

Few now believe that we have here more than a fragment of the truth. From the whole range of the coast opposite Britain between Jutland and the Seine, came, reinforced by kindred tribes that extended inland, the men who at different times took possession of the plains of Britain. They were Frisians of the coast, from islands over against our side of the Slesvig shore, still called the Frisian Islands, to the border of France, in the country that is to this day named after the Belgæ. They were called by a name of their own as Angles; but the name of Saxon, like that of Welsh (foreigner) given to the Cymry, seems to have been a name applied from without by the Romans and the Celts; as Welsh, meaning foreign, was a name given by



those whom they called Saxons to the Cymry. The Angles of the North of England were called Saxons by the bard of 'the Gododin,' and were Sassenach long after to the Highland Scot. It is therefore not improbable that the apparent difference between Saxon and Angle has arisen from the fact that the same people who ruled in the North under a native name, accepted the other when establishing, among those by whom they were called Saxon, their Angle kingdoms. If it was Egbert, King of the West Saxons, who first gave to the whole country the name of England—the land of the Angles—we may consent to the opinion that he would not have done this had it belonged to a differing race of Saxons, he being himself a Saxon.

From the Angles of Bede we turn lastly to the Saxons, whose land he identifies with Holstein. There is no record of Saxons. the geography of Germany within the period of Bede's six Anglo-Saxon settlements. But reasonable inferences can be drawn from comparison of the latest accounts before that period with the earliest accounts after it; that is to say, of the accounts given by Tacitus in the 'Germania' (A.D. 98), and by Claudius Ptolemy in his 'Geography' (A.D. 161), with those of the annalists of Charlemagne and his successors (for more than a century after Charlemagne's accession, A.D. 768). In Tacitus there is no Saxony; there are no Saxons. The first mention of Saxon is by Ptolemy, who places them on the mainland, and in three islands adjacent to the land north of the Elbe, from Hamburg westward to the sea, and northward to the Eider. This is the region corresponding to the Holstein districts of Stormar and Ditmarsh, with the (Frisian) islands, it is supposed, of Dylt, Fohr, and Nordstrand. Jutland was then known as the Cimbric Chersonesus, named, not in relation to the Cimmerians, or Cymry, but from the Scandinavian word Kiemper, a warrior. Both Tacitus and Ptolemy placed on the coast south of the Elbe, between that river and the Ems, a people called the Chauci. The rest of the coast, north-eastern France included, was said to be occupied by Frisians and Batavians. The Angles of Tacitus were on the Lower Elbe, about Hamburg, Lauenburg, and Holstein. They were the Angles of Bede's Angulus, with a wider extension to the south and west. Behind the Chauci of

the coast, whose country dipped far inland, south also of the Angles were a people called by Tacitus and Ptolemy Cherusci. Their land contained what we now call the Hartz Mountains, and included modern Saxony. South of the Cherusci were the Longobardi, and between the Cherusci and the Frisian coast were other tribes, the Angrivarii, whose district was about Engern, which is a small town between Bielefeld and Minden, and the Chamavi and Chasuarii in the province called afterwards Westphalia.

We pass now over the blank period of the six Anglo-Saxon settlements in England to the geography of Carlovingian times, two or three centuries subsequent to those events. The Franks called the parts lying to the north and east of their own frontier the four countries of the Slaves, the Danes, the Frisians, and the Saxons. The Slaves were in Eastern Europe; Dania was the country north of the Eyder, modern Jutland and Slesvig. Frisia was the coast-country between the Frank boundary and the Weser, consisting of the present Dutch provinces of Friesland and Groningen, East Friesland and a part of Oldenburg; thus including the chief part of the region formerly ascribed to the Chauci. As for the Saxony of Carlovingian days, this was a large region through which flowed the Elbe. North of the Elbe, Nordalbian, or Transalbian, Saxony, nearly corresponded to the Saxony of Ptolemy, its people being divided into Thiedmarsî (Ditmarshers), with Meldorp for their capital, and Holsati (dwellers in woods, Holsteiners) separated by the river Sturia from the Stormarii, whose capital was Hamburg. South of the Elbe the Cisalbian Saxons were divided into Westphalians and Eastphalians, with the Angrarians, formerly Angrivarii, between them. The Chamavi and Chasuarii are now Westphalian (west-dwelling) Saxons; the Angles and the Cherusci, with a tribe of Fosi, who had formerly been interposed, are now called Eastphalian (east-dwelling) Saxons. Until Ptolemy (A.D. 160) there is no mention of Saxons; after the time of Claudian (A.D. 400) there is no mention of Cherusci; and, as we hear less of this people as Cherusicans, we hear more of them as Saxons. Saxon, then, was a new name among the nations, which came into use during the second century. It was applied first to the sea-faring people who had the Holstein shore north of the

Elbe-mouth for the starting-point of their excursions, and who corresponded on the coasts of the North Sea, to the Angles on the Baltic side of a narrow peninsula. It is at least reasonable, therefore, to believe that the adjacent tribes formed one body of Angles, occupying land with two sea-fronts, to whom on one of their fronts, early in the second century, the name of Saxon was applied by those among whom, by their descents upon the coast of Gaul and Britain, they were making themselves a constant subject of discussion. The name of Saxon was extended afterwards to the people south of the Elbe, and, supplanting other local names in the geography of the foreigner, came to be applied to the inhabitants of that large tract of land in Germany whereof a fragment remains as the modern Saxony. It is certain that these people when settled in Britain, however they may have accepted distinctions made to account for the names Angle and Saxon, all called themselves alike the English folk, and their language the Engliscce Spræc, English. Of the word Anglo-Saxon, it may be recorded that it was first used in the life of Alfred the Great ascribed to Asser, where Alfred is called Angul-Saxonum Rex. The term is there meant, not as an expression of union between Angles and Saxons, but to distinguish Saxons of England from those of the Continent. It was not until long afterwards that the phrase came into use as a convenient technical name for the English people and their language during the first epoch of their national life; life that has since been marked by great changes in their method of speech and their vocabulary, and by some changes of importance even in the temper of the mind that these are to express.

To the geographical details here given I add only a pertinent sentence or two from King Alfred's account of the geographical voyages of the Northmen Ohthere and Wulfstan, communicated to him by those explorers, and introduced among his numerous variations and additions to the 'Geography' translated by him from Orosius. "To the north of the Thuringians," he says (*i.e.* of the district of Saxe-Gotha, Saxe-Weimar, &c.), "are the Old Saxons. To the north-west are the Frisians, and to the west of the Old Saxons is the mouth of the Elbe, as also Frisia. Hence to the west-north is that land called Angle-land, Sealand, and some part of Denmark." Again, in describing a voyage of

Ohthere to Æt-Hæthum, a "port by the heaths," which is identified with Haddeby on the Slie, opposite the town of Slesvig, or sometimes with old Slesvig itself, Alfred says that Æt-Hæthum "stands between the Wenedæ, the Saxons, and the Angles, and is subject to the Danes. For two days before Ohthere came to Hæthum, on his right hand was Jutland, Sæland, and many islands, all which lands were inhabited by the English before they came hither." These were the lands in and about the Angulus of Bede.

To all this external evidence as to the part of the Continent from which the Anglo-Saxons came to England, there is to be added the internal evidence of community of local and personal names and close analogy of language. Thus in English names of places we have words ending in *hurst*, meaning a copse or wood, and *beck*, meaning a brook. Between the Lower Elbe and Weser, as well as in Holstein north of the Elbe, such *horsts* are numerous. Our *becks* we find, again, in the *becks* and *bachs* of the same region, especially in the more inland part, where the Leine flows towards the Weser. Dr. R. G. Jathum believes also that in the widely-diffused Frisian ending *in um*, we have our own ending in *ham*, for names of places.

The evidence of language to the Frisian<sup>1</sup> origin of the Saxons is so strong that there is no contradiction between the statement of Procopius in the sixth century,<sup>1</sup> that <sup>Frisians and Saxons.</sup> Britain was inhabited by the three races of Britons, Angles, and Frisians, and Bede's statement that the inhabitants were Britons, Angles, and Saxons. Jacob von der Märland, who in the thirteenth century produced the first-fruits of Dutch poetry in his '*Spiegel Historical, or Mirror of History*,' claims Hengist himself as "a Frisian, a Saxon," who was driven out of the land, using the two words as synonyms:—

"Een hiet Engistus, een Vriese, een Sas  
Die, ut en Lande verdreven was."

And Verstegan quotes, to like effect, "an old Teutonic author, who saith thus:—

"Oude Boeken hoorde ic gewagen,  
Old books heard I to mention,

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<sup>1</sup> De Bello Gothico, iv. 20.

Dat al het lant beneden Nüemagen,  
That all the land beneath Nimeguen,

Wylen Neder Sassen hiet,  
Whilome Nether Saxon hight.'

Then goeth he on and telleth how the river of Scheldt was the western limit of the Saxon country. So as accounting now for the east side of Holsatia, which confineth on the Baltic Sea, unto this aforesaid river of Scheldt, Saxonland, or the country of the Saxons, contained in length more than three hundred miles. The same Teutonic author addeth further,

'Die Neder Sassen hieten nu Friesen,'

that is,

'The Nether Saxons are hight now Frisians.' "

There is a great diversity of dialect even among Frisians of islands but a couple of miles distant from each other; and it is not difficult to understand how Frisian dialects brought at different times from different parts of the opposite coast into this country, formed an Anglo-Saxon clearly and closely allied to Old Frisian, but, as far as the few extant fragments testify, exactly answering to nothing that it left upon the Continent. Variety of dialect, but no difference of language, distinguished in this country the Northumbrian from the South Saxon.

The place, then, of Anglo-Saxon, and of the modern English into which it has been developed during the last thirteen or fourteen centuries as a member of the Teutonic branch of the Indo-European family, is one of immediate relationship, not to the High German of modern Saxony, or to the Old Saxon that preceded it, but to the Low German of the seaward plains, to the Old Frisian spoken by the hardy race that battled constantly, and, as their broken coast shows, often in vain, against the sea that threatened to devour their homes, and through one dialect, or branch of Frisian, to the modern Dutch. The languages and dialects themselves have only to be compared, if upon this point we would make the evidence complete. To Friesland Proper belong written laws of the Free Frisians, of the east and west—Hanoverian and Dutch—that date from the twelfth century. The resemblance of their language to that of the Anglo-Saxons is very marked. Compare, for example, these Old Friesic words with the English, and observe how much more remote is the resemblance of the corresponding words in High

The place of  
Anglo-Saxon  
among lan-  
guages.

Thridde (dritte) Third. Threttene (dreizehn) Thirteen. Tid (Zeit) Tide, for time. Reek (rauch) Reek, for smoke. Harvst (herbst) Harvest. Hors (ross) Horse. Renda (reissen) Rend. Rida (reiten) Ride. Song (gesang) Song. Strete (strasse) Street. Thiaf or tief (dieb) Thief. Wid (weit) Wide. Wif (weib) Wife. Wet (nass) Wet. Weter or water (wasser) Water. Fridom (freiheit) Freedom. Swiet (süss) Sweet. Werfor (warum) Wherefore. Askia (fragen) to Ask. If the parallel were applied immediately to Anglo-Saxon or to the provincial words that retain untouched some portions of the ancient language lost to common English, then the evidence of close relationship becomes of irresistible extent.<sup>1</sup> A variety called North Frisian is still spoken by the Frisians of Slesvig, and Frisian is at this day the language of the fens of Saterland, in Oldenburg.

Of the Old Saxon language the most important extant specimen is a metrical Gospel History, called the 'Heliand' (German, Heiland), the Saviour. First discovered in an English library, it was, until the present century, mistaken for a Dano-Saxon poem written in this country. There are also, in Old Saxon, the Carolinian Psalms, the metrical legend of Hildebrand and Hathubrand, the 'Abrenuntio Diaboli,' and sundry fragments. Though less close than between Anglo-Saxon and Frisian, the general resemblance between Old Saxon and Anglo-Saxon, both in vocabulary and in grammatical form, is very striking.

But here is a Frisian noun, *Sunu*, a son, in word and declension exactly answering to the Anglo-Saxon. Nom. Gen. Dat. Acc. *Sing.* *Sunu*, *sunā*, *sunā*, *sunu* : *Plur.* *Sunā*, *sunenā*, *sunum*, *sunu*. Again, in another form of declension, Anglo-Saxon *Scip*,

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<sup>1</sup> In the Philological Society's 'Transactions' for 1855 is a paper by the Rev. J. Davies on the 'Races of Lancashire as indicated by the Local Names and Dialect of the County.' In this paper the author says, "it is highly important for the purposes of English philology, that the Old Friesic language should be more carefully studied by us, as it is, above all others, the *fons et origo* of our own." Stimulated by the suggestion, Dr. de Haan Hettema, Member of the Friesic Chivalry, entering the lists for Friesland, poured into the Philological Society's 'Transactions' for 1856 and 1858 copious illustrations of this truth. Omitting words which seem to be derived from Latin or French, although almost the same in Dutch or Frisian, omitting also Anglo-Saxon words, this gentleman has formed a list of four thousand examples of conformity between Old English, Dutch, and Frisian. A thousand of them are given in Tr. Philol. Soc. for 1858, pp. 144-178.

a ship, runs: *Sing.* Scip, scipes, scipe, scip. *Plur.* Scipu, scipa, scipum, scipu; while in Old Frisian, Skip, a ship, runs: *Sing.* Skip, skipis, skipe, skip. *Plur.* Skipu, skipa, skipam, skipu. The form for declension of an indefinite adjective, again, in Masculine, Feminine, and Neuter, is: *Sing. Nom.* A.-S. god, god, god. O. F. god, god, god. *Gen.* A.-S. godes, godre, godes. O. F. godes, godere, godes. *Dat.* A.-S. godum, godre, godum. O. F. goda (and -um), godere, goda (and -um). *Acc.* A.-S. godne, gode, god. O. F. godene, gode, god. Plural in all genders alike. A.-S. Gode, godra, godum, gode. O. F. Gode, godera, godum (and -a), gode. Compare, again, the declension of the pronoun corresponding to the Latin is, ea, id, from which we derive several of our English forms. M. F. and N. *Sing. Nom.* A.-S. se, seo, thæt. O. F. se, thi, that. *Gen.* A.-S. thæs, there, thæs. O. F. Thes, there, thcs. *Dat.* A.-S. Tham, tharc, tham. O. F. Tham, there, tham. *Acc.* A.-S. Thone, tha, thæt. O. F. Thene, se, thet. *Plur.* in all genders A.-S. Tha, thara, tham, tha. O. F. Se, therā, tham, se. So in conjugation of the auxiliary verb "to be," we have O. F. "he is" with a past "he was," and a subjunctive "he were." Again, in regular conjugation we have for a Present Indicative, in A.-S. Bærne (burn), bærnst, bærnth, and throughout the plural bærnath; O. F. Berne, bernst, bernth, and throughout the plural bernath.<sup>1</sup>

For the use of students and for readiness of reference as we proceed with the story of our language, I append to this chapter a sketch of what is, in fact, the backbone of good English, in a complete outline of the structure of Anglo-Saxon. Except a

<sup>1</sup> The examples of Old Frisian grammar, and some of the information given in the preceding portions of this chapter, I take from the fourth edition of the work of Dr. R. G. Latham on the English language (London, 1855)—a work of which the most essential part has been compressed by him into his excellent 'Handbook of the English Language for the Use of Students of the Universities and Higher Classes of Schools' (Third edition, 1858). The student of English may include with advantage either the smaller or larger work among his text-books. He will be much aided also by Dr. Smith's edition, with additional lectures and notes by himself and the late Dr. Donaldson, of Mr. S. P. Marsh's 'Lectures on the English Language,' issued as one of Mr. Murray's Student's Manuals. It is an especial charm of Mr. Marsh's writings upon English that his study of the language comes of a true relish for

change of my own in the place of the dividing line between the second and third declensions, which is explained in a note, and, I think, an obvious simplification, the digest follows the grammar of Erasmus Rask,<sup>1</sup> reducing it to essentials, and facilitating the apprehension of them by such formulas and summaries as a learner usually makes for himself.

## THE STRUCTURE OF ANGLO-SAXON.

*Alphabet compared with Modern English.*

MS. corruptions used as A.-S. letters:—

A . B . C . D . E . F . G . H . I . [—J] . [—K, used in later times  
 A A . B . D C . D . E . F . G . h . P . I . . K . for C]  
 a b c d e f s h i

L . M . N . O . P . [—Q] . R . S . T . U . [—V only in foreign  
 L . M . n . n . O . P . R . S . S . C . T . U . names]  
 l m n o p r s r t u

W . X . Y , [—Z only in foreign names].

P . X . Y . Z .

p f x y z

+ Æ . þ þ (th) . Ð ð (eth)

Æ . [ =th in thin] . [ =th in then] .

æ

Contractions:— þ (that), y (and).

Note the resemblance, sometimes overlooked in copying old English MSS., between p and w, and the possibility of confounding either with tha.

<sup>1</sup> 'A Grammar of the Anglo-Saxon Tongue, with a Praxis, by Erasmus Rask, Professor of Literary History in, and Librarian to, the University of Copenhagen, &c. &c. A New Edition, enlarged, and improved by the Author. Translated from the Danish by B. Thorpe.' Copenhagen, 1830. This grammar is the basis of 'A Guide to the Anglo-Saxon Tongue, with Extracts in Prose and Verse, Glossary, Appendix, and Notes, for the Use of Learners, by Edward Johnstone Vernon, B.A., Magdalene Hall.' London, 1846,—a book which, together with Mr. Benjamin Thorpe's 'Analecta Anglo-Saxonica, a Selection in Prose and Verse from Anglo-Saxon Authors of various ages; with a Glossary; designed chiefly as a First Book for Students.' London, 1846; and the condensed but practically enlarged edition of the Rev. Dr. Bosworth's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary (London, 1855), will enable anybody in a few months to read our early writers with ease and enjoyment, and appreciate more keenly than ever all that is best in English literature. I cannot too strongly urge the young student of English to be thorough, and teach himself Anglo-Saxon. The digest in the text will show him that the labour is light, while the reward is most abundant. Even by the mere help of that digest, Mr. Thorpe's 'Analecta,' which includes a glossary, will serve to carry the learner far upon his way.



**Pronunciation.**—Vowels nearly as in modern German. *Æ* is not a diphthong, but a letter with the sounds of English *a*, in *glad* and *glade*. Consonants nearly as in modern English. *c*, always hard, = *k*. *f* at the end of a syllable, or between two vowels = *v*; and *g* when between two of the letters *æ*, *e*, *i*, *y* = *y*; thus *lufige*, I love, is pronounced *lufiye*. *h* has a very hard sound. *þ* and *ð* are the sharp and flat sound of *th* (Gr. *θ*), as we still have letters in pairs for sharp and flat in *p* and *b*, *t* and *d*, *f* and *v*, *k* and *g*, *s* and *z*.

**Orthography** confused. The most common confusions are between *a* and *æ*; *o* and *a*, especially before *n* in a short syllable, (*man*, *mon*); *ea*, *eá*,—*e*, *é*; *i*, *í*,—*y*, *ý*; *eo*,—*y*,—*e* (*seolf*, *sylf*, *self*); *eo*,—*u*, especially after *w* (*sweord*, *sword*); *o*—*u* especially in terminations. *u* (= *v*)—*f* (*lune*, *lufe*): *g* is often added to words ending in *i*, or omitted from those ending in *ig*; *g* (= *y*) is sometimes placed before *e* or *i* (*geow*, *geall*). Other confusions in orthography are between *ng*—*nc*—*ngc*; *h*—*g*; *x*—*cs*. Accents are often omitted, yet the accent (') is essential, e. g. *ac*, but,—*ác*, *oak*; *wende*, turned,—*wénde*, expected; *is*, *is*,—*ís*, ice;—*for*, *for*,—*fór*, went; *æt*, *at*,—*æt*, *at*.—This accent is not tone. Tone is on the first syllable of the root; in compound words on the first word.

**Punctuation** in A.-S. was a dot at the end of a sentence, or line of a poem. Three dots marked the end of a discourse.

### ARTICLE AND DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUN

		Singular.			Plural.
		M.	F.	N.	
Nom.	..	se	.. .. seó	.. .. þæt	þá
Gen.	..	þæs	.. .. þære	.. .. þæs	þára
Dat.	..	þám	.. .. þære	.. .. þám	þám
Acc.	..	þone	.. .. þá	.. .. þæt	þá
Abl.	..	þý	.. .. þære	.. .. þý	þám

### NOUN.

For GENDER no precise rules. A.-S. agrees generally in this with German.

**Decision of Gender by Nominative Ending.**—All words in *a* (except names of women) are masculine, and all are of Decl. 1; in *u* they are either masc. or fem., and of Decl. 3; the rest may be m., f., or

*n.*, Decl. 1 or 2. **Decision of Gender by Declension.**—Nouns having a gen. sing. in *a* are masculine; gen. sing. in *e* are feminine. Plurals with a nominative in *as*, indicate masculine; plurals with a nominative unchanged, almost always neuter. Gender also may be determined by the inflexion of the indef. art. or adj. Gender supplies one of the chief grounds for variation in declension.

DECLENSION 1, of words ending in an essential vowel :—

#### Simple Order (or First Declension).

		Singular.			Plural.
		M.	F.	N.	
Nom.	..	a	.. .. e	.. .. e	an
Gen.	}	.. .. ..			ena
Dat. & }					
Abl. }					um
Acc.	..	..	(except)	.. .. e	an

*Complex Order (Second and Third Declension).*

DECLENSION 2, of words ending in consonant or unessential e (that is, e for i).  
3, of words ending in u.

		Second Declension.					Thirđ Declension. <sup>1</sup>			
		M.	F.	N.			M.	F.		
Singular.	Nom.	„(e)	.. „	.. „(e)			Nom.	u .. u	(no neuter.)	
	Gen.	es	.. e	.. es			Gen.	a .. e		
	Dat. & Abl.	} e	.. e	.. o			Dat. & Abl.	} a .. o		
	Acc.						„(e)			
	Plural.	Nom. & Acc.	} as	.. a			.. „(u)	Nom. & Acc.		
Gen.		a			.. a	.. a(ena)		Gen.	a(ena) .. ena	
Dat. & Abl.		} um	.. um	.. um	Dat. & Abl.	} um .. um				

(no neuter.)

*Summary of Declension.*

1. Dative and Ablative are one case. The sense of with (mid, expressed or understood) determines ablative.
2. Dat. and abl. plural always in un.
3. Nom. and Acc. often alike in sing., always in plur.
4. In simple order (Decl. 1) the single inflexion an sing. and plur., except that the neuter accusative sing. is like the nom.: the dat.-and-abl. plur. is of course un, and the gen. plur. in ena.
5. In complex order (Decl. 2, 3). Every feminine inflexion of the singular is -e. Except of the masculines in u, every dat.-and-abl. singular is in -e. Except of all the feminines and of the masculines in u, every gen. sing. is in es. Except of the feminines—for there are no feminines in nominative -e—every acc. sing. is like the nominative. Of the masculines in u, and of those nouns only, the gen., dat.-and-abl. sing. is in u. In the plurals of the complex order, nom. and acc. end in a for all feminines and for masculines in u. Masculines ending in a consonant or (e) have them in as, and neuters so ending have them like the singular, or else in u. The gen. plur. is in a, with sometimes ena for neuters or for masculines in u, and always ena for the feminines in u.

*Variations in Declension.*

1. The genitive plural, normally a, is sometimes preceded by en, also by r, as in adjectives; sometimes the e before un is left out.
2. The dative plural in un is sometimes written on or an.
3. Countries and places in a are sometimes indeclinable, sometimes declined after the Latin form.
4. Proper names in es sometimes have no additional es in the genitive.
5. Words in ung often have a instead of e in the abl. and dat. Feld (feald) also makes dat. felda, plur. feldas.
6. In monosyllables of the second declension having æ for root vowel, the æ become a in the plural of those words in which æ is represented by a in kindred tongues, as dæg, Germ. Tag, Eng. day,—stæf, Germ. Stab, Eng. staff; but not in

<sup>1</sup> Rask complicates the 3rd declension and obscures its marked characteristic by placing in it those neuters of the second which have a plural nominative in u.

those of which the æ is otherwise represented in English or German, as *dæl*, Germ. *Theil*, Eng. *deal*.

7. Some words transpose *cs* in the plural, as *fisc*, *fixas*; *disc*, *dixas*; *tusc*, *tuxses*.

8. All dissyllables in *el*, *en*, *er*, are apt to be contracted in the oblique cases, as *ceaster*, *ceastre*; feminines in *el* and *en* are often contracted even in the nominative, as *stefn* for *stefen*. Other dissyllables are liable to contraction when a vowel of inflexion follows.

9. Nouns ending in a single consonant after a short vowel, as *sib*, *peace*, double that consonant in inflexion (*sibbe*). It is so with words ending in *-nys* (*-nysse*).

10. *Sæ*, *sea*; *æ*, *law*; and *cá*, *river*, are usually indeclinable in the singular.

11. Some nouns are defective in singular, as *þa gifta*, the wedding (*les noces*); *lendenu*, *loins*; *þystru*, darkness. Others have no plural, as *rest*, *repose*.

12. For *u* there is sometimes *a* in the plural, as *beboda* for *bebodu*, commandments.

13. Some words in *u* change *u* into *w* or *ew* in oblique cases, as *meļu*, flour (*meal*), *melewe* and *melwe*.

14. *Feoh*, cattle, money, has gen. *feór*, dat. *feó*; also sometimes plural *feó*. Like this are *pleoh*, danger; *þeoh*, thigh. *Feorh*, life; *feores*, *feore*. *Æg*, egg, and *cealf*, calf, make in plural *ægru* and *cealfru*. *Niht* has sometimes the accusative *nihte*: *nihtes* is the adverb, by night, not to be confused with the genitive *nihte*. *Cu*, cow, sometimes has in gen. sing. *cus*, and in gen. plur. *cuna*.

### ADJECTIVE.

*Definite*.—All Adjectives in positive and superlative, when used with the definite article, are declined as the simple order of nouns; adjectives in the comparative are so declined, whether with or without the definite article. Also all adjectival pronouns and numerals with the definite article. Adjectives have three genders in each form, whether of this definite, or of the indefinite declension.

In the *Indefinite* declension there are peculiar terminations, namely, *re*, in all cases of the feminine singular, except the accusative, which is in *e*. In masculine and neuter singular there is a difference between dative and ablative, the dative being in *um*, the ablative in *e*; and there is an accusative masculine in *ne*. Genitive is in *cs*. In the plural all genders are declinable alike with a nominative and accusative in *-e* or *u*, and a genitive in *ra*; the dative as always in *um*.

#### *Indefinite Form.*

		M.		F.		N.
Singular.	Nom.	„	.. ..	„(u)	.. ..	„
	Gen.	cs	.. ..	re	.. ..	cs
	Dat.	um	.. ..	re	.. ..	um
	Acc.	ne	.. ..	e	.. ..	„
	Abl.	e	.. ..	re	.. ..	e
Plural.	Nom. &	} .. .. -e(u)				
	Acc. „	}				
	Gen.	.. ..	.. ..	ra		
	Dat. &	} i. .. .. um				
	Abl. „	}				

A second Indefinite declension is formed of the few monosyllables having *æ* for their vowel, of the passive participles of 2nd and 3rd conj. in *en*, and of polysyllables with derivative endings (in *ig*, *lic*, &c.). Those in *æ* change the root-vowel for the singular in the nom. and acc. feminine, and in all cases except those of the masculine; for the plural in all cases but the genitive; and they all have a fem.

Neuters of adjectives are sometimes used as substantives.

An adjective in the positive degree is used adverbially by adding -o, as *yfele*, evilly.

*Comparison.*—Comparative and superl. signs are -or and -ost, used adverbially. Sometimes we find *ur* or *ar*, *ust* or *ast*, and *yste* or *iste* for *este*.

M. F. N.

Comparative declension is of endings -ra -re -re, according only to the simple order.

Superlative declension is of *ost*, the adverbial ending, for indefinite declension, and of *esta*, -e -e for the definite.

Some adjectives change the vowel in comparison; those of decl. 1 which do so have not *or* and *ost*, but *re* and *est* even adverbially. Others, of which the chief examples follow, are *irregular* :—

<i>gód</i> (wel)	<i>good</i>	<i>betera</i> (bet)	<i>besta</i> (best)
<i>yfel</i> (yfele)	<i>bad, evil</i>	<i>wyrse</i> (wyr)	<i>wyrst</i> (wyrrest)
<i>neah</i>	<i>near</i>	<i>nearre</i> (near, nyr)	<i>nyhst</i> (nehst)
<i>þæt forme</i> (forð)	<i>first</i>	<i>furðre</i> (furðor)	<i>fyrmost</i>
<i>mycel</i> (mycle)	<i>great</i>	<i>mære</i> (ma)	<i>mæst</i>
<i>lytel</i>	<i>little</i>	<i>læsse</i> (les)	<i>læst</i>
<i>(ær)</i>	<i>before, ere</i>	<i>ærra</i> (ærre æror)	<i>ærest</i> (-ost)
<i>sið</i>	<i>late</i>	<i>siðre</i> (siðor)	<i>siðmost</i>
<i>norðewearð</i> (norð)	<i>norðward</i>	(norðor)	<i>norðmost</i>
<i>niðewearð</i> (niðer)	<i>nether</i>	<i>niðere</i> (niðor)	<i>niðmost</i>
<i>ufewearð</i> (up)	<i>upward</i>	<i>ufere</i> (ufor)	<i>yfmost</i>
<i>utewearð</i> (ut)	<i>outward</i>	<i>utere</i> (utor)	<i>ytemost</i>
<i>innewearð</i> (inn)	<i>inward</i>	<i>innere</i> (innor)	<i>innmost</i>

Inmost is, therefore, not compounded of *in* and *most*.

## PRONOUN.

### Personal.

	1st.	2nd.	3rd.
			M. F. N.
Sing. Nom.	ic	þu	he heó hit
Gen.	mín	þín	his hire his
Dat.	me	þe	him hire him
Acc.	me (meh, mee)	þe (peh, pee)	him he hit
	Dual.	Plur.	Plural.
Nom.	wit	we	hi (hig)
Gen.	uncer	úre (user)	hira (heora)
Dat.	unc	us	him (heom)
Acc.	unc	us (usih)	hi (hig)

The variations between brackets occur sometimes in poetry.

The third personal pronoun is used as a *Reflective*, or *syf* declined as an adjective is added to the personal in equal case and gender, or placed as nominative after a dative, as *he-syf*. *Sín* is sometimes used by the poets as reflective possessive of 3rd person.

### Possessive

formed from the genitives of only the *two first* persons is declined as the indefinite adjectives. When the syllable of inflexion begins with a vowel, those in *er* are

additional -re in the fem. When user is used for ure, it is declined irregularly, thus:—

		M.		F.		N.
Singular.	Nom.	user	..	user	..	user
	Gen.	usses	..	usse	..	usses
	Dat. &	} ussum	..	usso	..	ussum
	Abl.					
	Acc.	uscrno	..	usse	..	user
Plural.	Nom. &	} .. .. usso	}	(user)		
	Acc.					
	Gen.	.. .. ussa				
	Dat. &	} .. .. ussum	}			
	Abl.					

#### *Demonstrative.*

Se, seo, þæt, used also as article (see above) = is, en, id, is used also as a relative pronoun. The þære demonstrative is þes, þeos, þis (hic, hæc, hoc).

Singular.	M.		F.		N.		Plural.
Nom.	þes	..	þeos	..	þis	.. ..	þas
Gen.	þises	..	þisso	..	þises	.. ..	þissa
Dat.	þisum	..	þisse	..	þisum	.. ..	þisum
Acc.	þisno	..	þis	..	þis	.. ..	þas
Abl.	þise	..	þisso	..	þise	.. ..	þisum

We find also þisum for þisum, þisses for þises. Also þissere and þissera for þisse and þissa, and in plur. þæs for þas (these and those).

Indeclinable þe is often used for se, seo, þæt, especially with a relative signification, and later as an article (the). Compound þætþe is read þætte.

#### *Interrogative.*

Hwyle, which? hwæðer, whether? follow the indefinite declension; and hwá, hwæt, who, what, is thus declined. (It has only a singular.)

	M.					N.
Nom.	hwá	..	..	..	..	hwæt
Gen.	..	..	..	..	hwæs	
Dat.	..	..	..	..	hwám (hwám)	
Acc.	hwone (hwæne)	..	..	..	hwæt	
Abl.	..	..	..	..	hwí	

This is never used with a substantive, and with an adjective usually governs the genitive, as hwæt yfeles, what evil?

*Note.*—Hwæðer in neuter is used for making a whole proposition interrogative.

#### *Notes on Pronouns.*

*Indefinite Pronouns*, æghwæt, æghwylc, &c., are declined according to the last word in their compound.

Sum (some) is often found after gen. plur. of the cardinal numbers, meaning "about that number."

Fela (much, many) is indeclinable.

Öðer means other, or second; awðer, one of two.

These and most pronouns not otherwise characterised follow the indefinite

*Cardinal Numbers.*—án, twá, þreó, feower, fíf, six, seofon, eahta, nigon, tyn, endlufon (one left), twelf (twá lufon two left over ten), þreottýne, feowertyne, &c.

*Ordinal Numbers.*—Se forna (first), se oðer (second), se þrydda, feorþa, fifta, sixta, seofþa, eahtapa, nigopa, teoþa, endlyftá, twelfta, þrytteoða, feowerteoða, &c.

For numerals the A.-S. used the Roman I, II, &c.

Of the *Cardinal Numbers*, án is declinable like an adjective.

{ twá and þreó thus:—

{ ba (both)

	M.	F.	N.
Nom. & Acc.	twégen ..	twá ..	twá (tú)

Gen.	.. ..	twegra (twega)
------	-------	----------------

Dat. & Abl.	.. ..	twám
-------------	-------	------

Nom. & Acc.	þrý ..	þreó ..	þreó
-------------	--------	---------	------

Gen.	.. ..	þreóra
------	-------	--------

Dat. & Abl.	.. ..	þrym
-------------	-------	------

Feower retains feower in dative. Fíf and six and seofon sometimes have genitive in a. Eahta, nigon, endlufon, and compounds in tynce are indeclinable. The others are declinable, also the tens in tig, but without gender.

Hund, prefixed to tens after 60, is sometimes omitted when a hund precedes.

Units added to tens as ordinals go first with "and," or last as cardinals. In ordinals after 100 the smaller number is last, and the substantive is repeated, as hund wintra and þrittig wintra.

The *Ordinals* follow definite declension, except oðer. Hund, hundred, þúsend, are substantives, and form no ordinals.

Healf after an ordinal diminishes it by one-half.

*Multiplicatives* in feald are declined as adjectives; +lice are adverbs; +nes are nouns. Sið added to ordinals in abl. sing. or to cardinals in the plur. means "times."

### VERBS.

Anglo-Saxon verbs form the passive, as in English, by help of Auxiliaries. They have the usual moods, but no active future among the tenses. The present stands for the future. Wille and sceal express will or command, but only indirectly, and occasionally a sense of futurity. The active perfect of verbs is formed with hæbbe, the pluperf. with hæfde, and the participle. In the passive the auxiliaries of the present are eom or weorðe; of the imperfect, wæs, wearð; of the perfect, eom-worden; of the pluperfect, wæs-worden; of the future, beo or sceal beon.

#### Auxiliaries.

	Ind. pres. eom	Ind. imperf. wæs
Wesan, to be.	cart	wæro
Inf. pres. ger. wesan-ne	is ('ys')	wæs
pres. part. wesende	pl. synd (syndon)	pl. wæron
past part. (gewesen)	Subj. pres.	Subj. imperf.
	sing. sý (seó, síg)	sing. wære
	pl. syn	pl. wæron
	Imperative, sing. 2, wes, plur. 2, wesað, wese.	

There is also negative neom so conjugated.

Eom with a gerund expresses obligation, as, is to lufigenne (ought to be loved); with the present part. denotes a precise point of time.

*Beón*, to be.

	Ind. pres. beó byst byð	Ind. imperf. (is wanting).
Inf. pres. ger. beón -ne	pl. beoð and beó	
pres. part. beónde	Subj. pres. sing. beó pl. beón	Subj. imperf. (is wanting).
	Imperative, sing. beó, plur. beoð (beó).	

*Habban*, to have (also *nabban* its negative).

	Ind. pres. habbe (hæbbe) hæfst (hafast) hæfð (hafað)	Ind. imperf. hæfde hæfdest hæfde
Inf. pres. habban	pl. we habbað (hafað)	pl. hæfdon
ger. habbenne	habbe, we, &c.	
part. pres. hæbbende	Subj. pres. sing. habbe (hæbbe) pl. habbon (an)	Subj. imperf. sing. hæfde pl. hæfdon
past part. hæfd (hæfed)		
	Imperative, sing. hafa, pl. ge habbað and habbe ge.	

*Willan*, to will (and its negative *nyllan*).

	Ind. pres. wille (nelle) wilt (nelt, &c.) will	Ind. imperf. wolde woldest wolde
Inf. pres. willan	pl. we, &c., willað	pl. woldon
part. willende	Subj. pres. sing. wille pl. willon (en)	Subj. imperf. sing. wolde pl. woldon
	Imperative to negative, nelle þu.	

*Weorðan*, to become (German *werden*).

	Ind. pres. weorðe wyrst wyrð	Ind. imperf. wearð wurde wearð
Inf. pres. ger. weorðan -no	pl. weorpað & weorðe	pl. wurdon
pres. part. weorðende	Subj. pres. sing. weorðe pl. weorðon	Subj. imperf. sing. wurde pl. wurdon
past part. (ge)worden		
	Imperative, weorð, weorpað, and weorðe.	

*Sceal*, shall.

Ind. pres. sceal scealt sceal	Subj. pres. scyle
pl. sceolon (sceolon)	Imperfect sceolde plur. sceoldon

*The Three Conjugations.*

Verbs are simple and complex. Their conjugation is defined by the character of the imperfect tense. The *Simple Verbs* (including all verbs in *ian*, which are mostly derivative) form *Conjugation I.*, and are divided into three classes: *a*, those forming the imperf. in *ode*; *b*, those forming it in *de* or *te* only [*d* after a soft consonant, *d, ð, f, w, g, or l, m, n, r, s.* *t* after a hard one, *t, p, c, h, x*, and *s* when preceded by another consonant]; *c*, those of which the imperf. is in *de* or

te, with a change of vowel in the preceding syllable. The past participle is in all these classes simply formed by omitting the final *e* from the imperfect.

The *Complex Verbs* form the second and third conjugations. Their imperfects are all monosyllables, their past participles are in *en* or *n*. They all change their root vowel in forming the imperfect, and they are classed according to the nature of that change as follows :

Conjugation II.				Conjugation III.			
Class :— a — b — c .. ..   .. ..				a — b — c			
changes the vowel } in the imperf. } indic. and subj. to }				a — á — oú			
throughout.				not throughout, but :			
				becoming in the } 2nd pers. sing., } and the whole } plural of indie., } and throughout } the subj. }			
				: : : : : : i : u : : : : :			

## EXAMPLES.

## Conjugation I.

a
b
c

		Classes						
		a		b		c		
<i>Indicative.</i>								
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 1	.. ..	lufige (love)	.. ..	bærne (burn)	.. ..	syлле (give, sell)	
	2	.. ..	lufast	.. ..	bærnst	.. ..	syлst	
	3	.. ..	lufað	.. ..	bærnð	.. ..	syлð	
	plur. }	we, &c., lufiað		bærnað &		.. .. syllað &		
	1, 2, 3 }	.. .. lufige we, &c.		bærne		.. .. syлле		
<i>IMPERFECT.</i>								
	sing. 1	.. ..	lufode	.. ..	bærnde	.. ..	sealde	
	2	.. ..	odest	.. ..	dest	.. ..	sealdeст	
	3	.. ..	ode	.. ..	de	.. ..	sealde	
	plur. 1, 2, 3	.. ..	odon	.. ..	don	.. ..	sealdon	
			(edon)					
<i>Subjunctive.</i>								
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 1, 2, 3	.. ..	lufige	.. ..	bærne	.. ..	syлле	
	plur. 1, 2, 3	.. ..	lufion (an)	.. ..	bærnon (an)	.. ..	syллон	
<i>IMPERFECT.</i>								
	sing.	.. ..	lufode	.. ..	bærnde	.. ..	sealde	
	p <sup>r</sup>	.. ..	odon	.. ..	don	.. ..	don	
			(edon)					
<i>Imperative.</i>								
<i>Present.</i>	sing. a	.. .	lufa	.. ..	bærn	.. ..	syлa	
	plur. 2	.. .	ge lufiað &	.. .	bærnað &	.. ..	syllað &	
			lufige go }		bærne }		syлле }	
<i>Infinitive.</i>								
<i>Present</i>		.. ..	lufian	.. ..	bærnan	.. ..	syллан	
<i>Gerund</i>		.. ..	(tó) lufigenne	.. ..	bærnenne	.. ..	syлленne	
<i>Part. present</i>		.. ..	lufigende	.. ..	bærnende	.. ..	syлленde	
<i>Part. past</i>		.. ..	(go) lufod	.. ..	bærned	.. ..	seald	



## Conjugation II.

		Classes		
		a	b	c
<i>Indicative.</i>				
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 1	.. .. ete (eat)	.. .. læte (let)	.. .. fare (go)
	2	.. .. yst	.. .. læst	.. .. færst
	3	.. .. yt	.. .. læt	.. .. færð
	plur. }	.. .. etað & }	.. .. lætað & }	.. .. farað & }
	1, 2, 3 }	ete }	læte }	fare }
<i>IMPERFECT.</i>	sing. 1	.. .. æt	.. .. let	.. .. fôr
	2	.. .. æte	.. .. lete	.. .. fôre
	3	.. .. æt	.. .. let	.. .. fôr
	plur. 1, 2, 3	.. .. æton	.. .. leton	.. .. fôron
<i>Subjunctive.</i>				
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 1, 2, 3	.. .. ete	.. .. læte	.. .. fare
	plur. 1, 2, 3	.. .. eton	.. .. læton	.. .. faron
<i>IMPERFECT.</i>	sing.	.. .. æte	.. .. lete	.. .. fôre
	plur.	.. .. æton	.. .. leton	.. .. fôron
<i>Imperative.</i>				
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 2	.. .. et	.. .. læt	.. .. far
	plur. 2	.. .. etað & }	.. .. lætað & }	.. .. farað & }
		eto }	læte }	fare }
<i>Infinitive.</i>				
<i>Present</i>	.. ..	.. .. etan	.. .. lætan	.. .. furan
<i>Gerund</i>	.. ..	.. .. etanne	.. .. lætanne	.. .. faranne
<i>Part. present</i>	.. ..	.. .. etende	.. .. lætende	.. .. farende
<i>Part. past</i>	.. ..	.. .. eten	.. .. læten	.. .. furen

## Conjugation III.

		Classes		
		a	b	c
<i>Indicative.</i>				
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 1	.. .. byrne (burn)	.. .. write (write)	.. .. sceôto (shoot)
	2	.. .. byrnst	.. .. writst	.. .. scýtst
	3	.. .. byrnð	.. .. writ	.. .. scýt
	plur. }	.. .. byrnað & }	.. .. writað & }	.. .. sceôtað & }
	1, 2, 3 }	byrne }	write }	sceôto }
<i>IMPERFECT.</i>	sing. 1	.. .. barn	.. .. wrát	.. .. sceát
	2	.. .. *burno	.. .. *write	.. .. *scute
	3	.. .. barn	.. .. wrat	.. .. sceat
	plur. 1, 2, 3	.. .. *burnon	.. .. *writon	.. .. *scuton
<i>Subjunctive.</i>				
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 1, 2, 3	.. .. byrne	.. .. write	.. .. sceôto
	plur. 1, 2, 3	.. .. byrnon	.. .. writon	.. .. sceôton
<i>IMPERFECT.</i>	sing.	.. .. *burne	.. .. *write	.. .. *scute

## Conjugation III.—continued.

		Classes		
		a	b	c
		<i>Imperative.</i>		
<i>Present.</i>	sing. 2	.. .. byrn .. ..	writ .. ..	secōt
	plur. 2	.. .. byrnað & } byrne }	.. writað & } wite }	.. .. secōtað } secote }
		<i>Infinitive.</i>		
<i>Present</i>	.. ..	.. .. byrnan .. ..	writan .. ..	secōtan
<i>Gerund</i>	.. ..	.. .. byrnanne .. ..	writanne .. ..	secōtanne
<i>Part. present</i>	.. ..	.. .. byrnende .. ..	writende .. ..	secōtende
<i>Part. past</i>	.. ..	.. .. buruen .. ..	writen .. ..	scoten

## NOTES ON CONJUGATION (Variations included.)

CONJUGATION I a.—The g in *lufge*, &c = y, and stands by a rule of euphony between i (the essential letter of verbs in ian and e. A few verbs in ian have sometimes -ede and -ed for -ode and -od, as *seghan* (to sail), *cūan* (to plough). In this and in all conjugations the two plural forms in að and e are used, að when the verb follows, e when it precedes a pronoun.

I b—This class includes transitives (as *tyllan*, to fell derived from intransitives of Conjugations II or III *feallan*, to fall), also derivatives from substantives and adjectives not having i for characteristic (*trīpan*, to bind, from *trāp*, rope). Here and always when a consonant is double it becomes single before another consonant. e also is inserted before st when euphony demands it, in the present tense, *neft* in imperfect. Those in -tan and -dan take no additional t or d in imperfect: *etlan*, to set,—*sette*. Those in -san take generally t for ð in 3rd person (as *alþ* t, he redeems).

Some verbs follow both these forms, as *leoſian*, also *hibban*, to live. In this class are some verbs in ean—(*ſean*, which must not be confounded with *ian*). The e is often used at random after e and g.

I c—Here the past participle is always contracted. *Habban* and *willan* are irregulars of this class. Eleven other verbs of the class change the vowel in the monosyllabic present, as well as in the imperfect. The auxiliary *ſeal* (shall) is one, the other ten are

<i>Present Indicative.</i>			<i>Imperf Indicative</i>		
cunnan, to know, s	can, cunne (or caust, can,	pl. cunnon ..	.. s	cuð, ..	pl cuðon
munan, to give ..	an, unne .. .. . an	pl munon ..	..	uðe .. .. .	uðon
gemanan, to re- member }	geman, gemanst ..	geman pl. gemaunon	.. .	gemunde ..	gemundo.
<i>Present Subjunctive.</i>					
to dare	dear, dearest .. .. . dear	pl. durion ..	.. ..	1 duro	.. dorston
				2 dorste	
to need	þearf, þearfst .. .. . þearft	pl þurfon ..	.. ..	þurfe .. ..	þorfton
	or þurfe			3 þorfte	
dugan, to help ..	drāh .. .. . . . . .	pl dugon ..	<i>(Imperf Indicative, dohte.)</i>		
may, mæg, miht	.. .. . . . . . mæg	pl maigon ..	<i>Imperf. Ind. mihte, mihton</i>		
			or		
	must, môt, môt .. .. . . . mot	pl moton ..	Pr. Subj.	meahite, meahit	
				or	
agan, to possess	áh, áge .. .. . . . áls	pl agon ..	mot) ..	môte, môtton	
			áge ..	álhte, álton	
witan, to know ..	wát, wást .. .. . wat	pl. witon ..	wite ..	wiste, wiston	
&				&	
neg. nýtan.				wisse	

In these verbs the pres. plural in on is usually changed to e before the pronoun (we *mago* but *nu* *mage* we, now may we). Most of them want the past part. but *can* has *cuð*, &c.

CONJUGATION II. a.—To this class belong the irregular auxiliaries *wesan* and *beón*, to be. It contains words that have long *e* or *i* (not *é*, *í*) before a single characteristic. Those before a double characteristic substitute *e* for one of the two letters in the imperative, as *liege*, *lige*.

Irregulars in this class are *geseón*, to see, *ic geseó*, *he gesýhð* or *geseah*,

pl. { *gesawon*,  
*gesewen*, or  
*gesegen*.

Imperf. *geseóh* or *gesýh*.

*gefeón*, to rejoice, *ic gefeó*, *he gefeáh* pl. { *gefagen*  
*gefægen*.

*cweðan*, to say, is regular, except that it changes *ð* into *d* in the plural imperfect, the imperative, and the past participle.

II. b, contains not many words, of which some have short *eo* for short *e* in the imperfect. To the 1st person of *hó* and *onfó h* is sometimes added, but this belongs rather to 2nd person imperative.

II. c.—*faran* must not be confounded with *féran*, to convey or change place, which belongs to I. b.

CONJUGATION III. a, of words having a short *i* (*y*) before *rn*, *nn*, *ng*, *nc*, *nd*, *mb*, *mp*, or a short *e* or *eo* before *ll*, *lg*, *lt*, *rp*, *rf*, *rg*, &c., with a short *ea* (*æ*) in the imperf., and in the past part. *o*. To this belongs the irregular auxiliary *weorðan*, to become.

III. b, of all verbs with a hard *i* = German *ei*.

III. c.—In this, which like the preceding is very regular, *scóðan*, to see the, changes *ð* to *d* in some inflexions; some in *s*,—*ceósan*, to choose, *forleósan*, to lose, *hreósan*, to rush,—change in like manner *s* to *r*.

#### FORMATION OF WORDS,

by *Derivation*, which is prefix or suffix of parts having no present meaning by themselves; by *Composition*, which is joining of words.

##### 1. DERIVATION.—

a. *Prefixes*, of negation, opposition, &c.: *un-*, *on-*, *n-* (used chiefly with pronouns and adverbs). *or-*, *a-*, *æ-*, *oð-*, *mis-*, *wan-* or *won-* (derived from *alþ*, *wana*, lacking), *and-*, *wiðer-*, *to-* and *for-*, which often imply deterioration.

of time, place, degree, &c.: *ge-* sometimes collective, implies activity, often seems to be a mere augment, as in verbs. *be-* (usually implies activity), *ed-* (= *re-*, again), *sin-* (ever), *sam-* (half), *sam-* (together, from *samod*), *æl-* (all).

to pronouns, and adverbs: *hw-* (interrogative), *h-* *s-* (determinate, as *hider*, *swa*), *þ* (determinate, as *þæt*, *þiðer*),  
(chiefly as regards the speaker) (chiefly as regards another thing)  
*æg-* *ge-*.

b. *Suffixes*, denoting persons: *-a*, *-ere*, *-estre*, *-end*, *-e*, *-el*, *-ol*,  
(also things) (masc.) (fem.) (also things)  
*-ing*, *-ling* (diminutive), *-waru* (inhabitants of a  
(also) (sometimes also) (plur. -ware)  
*patronymics* of contempt)  
town or country), *-en*.  
(masc. and a few neuters.)

c. *Suffixes*, denoting action, quality, &c.: -m, (masc.) -els, (usually masc.) -lac, -had, scype, (masc.)

-dom, -nað, -að, -oð, -uð, -ð, -d, -t, (mostly fem.) -ot, -t, (masc. from verbs) -ing, (masc.)

-ung, -le, -nes, -nys, -nis, -u, -o, (chiefly to form names of qualities from adjectives) -ern, (neuters, denoting a place) -ed, -l.

*Adjectival Terminations*: -e, -ig, -lic, -sum, -isc, -ol, (mental quality) -en, (especially denotes a material)

-ern, (chiefly regions of globe) -bære, -ed -d, -iht, -cund, (nature of thing) -weard, (situation) -tig, (tens in numbering)

-oðe, -feald, (in ordinal numbers) (-fold)

*Adverbial Terminations*: -um or -es, from cases; -e (usual when adverb formed from adjective), -lice, -der, -er, -ær, -ar, -an, -on.

*Verbal Terminations*: -ian (most universal), -cian, -gian, -sian, -nian, -an, -ctian, -læcan.

2. COMPOSITION.—Anglo-Saxons made much use of compound words. The last part of the compound shows its part of speech by termination or inflexion, and usually is the main word which the other defines and qualifies. The words most commonly used are heafod- (head), þeod- (people), ful- (full), heah- (high), efen- ean (=) -land, -burh, -rice, -craeft, -man, -wis, -fast, -full, (sometimes nouns + us, or adverbs + hec) -leas (less), (whence nouns in -nis, -lyst, or -leofot)

SYNTAX.—Anglo-Saxon Syntax has a general resemblance to the Greek and Latin.

The *Verb* usually, but not invariably, following both subject and object, comes last in the sentence. The negative generally stands before the verb, "Not fear ye," instead of "Fear ye not."

*Nouns* are in the genitive when they denote measure, value, weight, age, &c., as sex peniga wyrthe, sixpennyworth; or if answering the question when, as ussa tida, In (of) our times. They are sometimes, however, in the dative, with the preposition "on" answering that question, as on oprum dæge, on the second day; or in the ablative, as in the text that, our Lord went through the fields, restedagun, on the Sabbath-day. There is an ablative absolute in A.-S. as in Latin—as, up-a-sprungenre suman (orto sole), the sun having arisen.

Of *Adjectives* the indefinite form is used for exclamations, and the adjectives in A.-S., as in other languages, govern cases in genitive for measure, baskets full of; or want, as leohtes leas, lightless; dative for similitude, like to, &c.

*Pronouns*.—A short pronoun in the dative is put between subject and verb close to the verb, as "Then it was said to him," &c., þa sæde him mon, &c. The article is sometimes used with proper names, as Se Johannes, John. Sometimes it is used together with the pronoun, as He se biseop, he the bishop; or after other pronouns, as "in thine the holy name." In short sentences the relative pronoun is often omitted. There being no reciprocal pronoun, each other, one another, are expressed by a repetition of the personal; for "they met each other,"

it would be "they met they." This personal supplies also the place of the relative when *þe* precedes, as, *þe þurh līne*, through whom.

*Verbs* usually govern the accusative. Signifying to name, they govern the nominative. Many too govern the genitive, as *lystan* to lust or desire, *wundrian* to wonder at, or govern the accusative or dative of the person and the genitive of the thing. Others, as *fyligan* to follow, *beodan* to bid, and *andswarian* to answer, *þancan* to thank (*þanca Gode*, thank God), govern the dative. The present infinitive is never used with the particle *tó*, as in modern English. But the gerund always requires *tó*. The preposition is sometimes separated from the word it governs and placed, for emphasis, immediately before the verb, as "which all creatures (by live) live by," instead of, "by which all creatures live."

*Prepositions*.—These among others govern the dative: *fram*, from; *of*, of; *bý*, by, through; *æt*, at; *tó*, to; *intó*, into; *ær*, before, ere; *feor*, far; *be norðan*, to the north of; *behindan*, behind; *beheonan*, on this side; *betweox*, betwixt, among; *bútan*, without, except; *betwynan*, between. These govern both accusative and dative: *for*, for; *beforan*, before; *oð*, unto; *gemang*, among; *on*, on; *uppon*, upon; *innon*, within; *úton*, without; *ofer*, over; *under*, under; *tó-geannes*, towards. *Mid*, with, governs accusative and ablative. These govern the accusative only: *geond*, beyond, through; *þurh*, through, by; *ymb*, round, about; *ongcan*, agen, against, towards; *wiðæftan*, after, behind; *wiðforan*, before; *wiðinnan*, within; *wiðútan*, without; *abútan*, about; *ymbútan*, round about.

*Conjunctions* are numerous and partly simple, partly compound, or of two words separated in the sentence, but mutually dependent, as *swa . . . swa*, so . . . as, *hwæðer þe . . . þe*, whether . . . or. Some govern the subjunctive, especially, as in Latin, in subordinate propositions, such are *þæt*, that; *tó þon þæt*, to the end that; *þeáh*, though; *swylec*, as if; *gif*, if; *hwæðer*, whether; *sam . . . sam*, whether . . . or. The verbal conjunction *utan*, with the infinitive expresses desire or intention, as *utan wircan mannan*, let us make man.

*Adverbial Expressions*.—*Gea*, is A.-S. for *yca*, yes. *Ne* means not, and usually stands before the verb. *Nas* is used also for not. *Na* is English no, though in composition it stands commonly for none. *Ne se*, for no, is opposed to *ge se*, yes. Negative words compounded with *ne* have also the *ne* repeated in the sentence, even if there be another negative in it, as "No man ever saw God," *Ne geseáh næfre nán man God*.

*PROSODY*.—The structure of the verse used by the Anglo-Saxons will be illustrated, as we proceed, by the discussion of their poetry.

The rule of versification given by Rask has been questioned by Mr. Guest in his *English Rhythms*, and Mr. Guest thinks that, the rule being made, the text of MSS. is sometimes tortured into orthodoxy. The rule seems, however, to have been fairly deduced from Anglo-Saxon practice. Versification is not by syllabic quantity, but by alliteration; "that is, when, in two immediately successive and connected lines, there occur three words beginning with the same letter, and so that the third or last word stands first in the second line, and the two others are in the first line, the initial letters in these three words are then called 'riming letters.' The last of these letters is considered as the 'chief letter;' after which, the two letters in the preceding verse, which are called 'sub-letters,' must be adjusted." If the chief letter is a vowel, the sub-letters also must be vowels; yet, if possible, *not* the

## CHAPTER V.

SUCH writing as the ancient Gaels carved upon staves, in Oghuim letters, was known of old to the Scóp of the Anglo-Saxons. The Scóp derived from Scapan, to Earliest Anglo-Saxon literature, Runes. Shape or Create, his name, that corresponded in sense to the Greek Poet, or Maker. Song and joy were expressed by the same word Glee; the harp was the glee-beam, and the minstrel was the glee-man. But the joy of the song lay seldom in its gaiety of theme, war or religion, treated always with a solid earnestness. The song was the companion of feasts, and therefore glee was at once music and joy. In Pagan times there was no topic but war that pleased the chieftain whom the minstrel served. The poet was the family historian, who praised with a full stomach and ready wit the deeds of which his patron was most proud. He planned his praise into a harmony of words that served not only to please the ear. When literature was preserved only or chiefly by oral tradition, and there were few records but those of memory, the metrical form of delivery served as a technical aid to exact recollection; and this, we shall find, was to a remarkable degree the character of the short-lined, alliterative Anglo-Saxon verse.\*

But if there were no writers of books, there were writers of Runes. Runic inscriptions are not found in the South of England, where, innocent although most of them doubtless were, they were rooted out by Christian zeal as relics of Pagan superstition. They were simply inscriptions in the letters used by the Teutonic nations, and by others too, before the Roman alphabet supplanted them; and the word Rune, not only suggestive of magic but in the mere sense of a letter, remained in occasional use among the Anglo-Saxons in this country. Of the Runes themselves, which seem to have been used for some time among the Angles of the North country, we still have both in MS. and cut upon stone several northern examples.

For after the flight of Paulinus they were missionaries of the Gaelic school, trained rather to adapt than destroy memorials of Paganism, who Christianised Northumbria. Mercia, too, was taught by Gaelic monks of Lindisfarne; and we have Runes upon the coins of its first Christian kings, Peada and Ethelred.

The Runic letters, which vary among each other in different parts of ancient Europe, but show clear signs of a common origin, are not utterly unlike the Phœnician-Hebrew ancestors of the present European alphabet. They do not form an A B C nor an alpha-beta, but their first-named symbols have the powers of the letters f, ú, th, ó, r, c; for which reason the order of the Runic letters is called, not an alphabet, but a futhorc. The Phœnician-Hebrew alphabet, whence we derive that now prevalent, was, like every other first effort at writing, symbolic and pictorial. Thus its letters were—Aleph, an ox; Beth, a house; Gimel, a camel; Daleth, a door; He, a window; Vau, a peg; Zayin, a sword; and so forth. The Runic futhorc is constructed in the same way, and also begins with a head of cattle. Head and horns, conventionally pictured, stood first for Feoh, an ox; and then the list proceeded—Ur, a bull; Thorn, a tree; Os, a door; Rad, a saddle; Cæn, a torch, &c.—giving apparently as many letters as the sounds of the Teutonic speech required. But if the Runic alphabet or futhorc did really give a letter for each sound, it did what the Roman alphabet certainly does not, either for Anglo-Saxon or for modern English of any later period, although it does bestow upon us such letters of supererogation as c, q, and x.

Among examples in this country of Runic inscriptions is a memorial of King Alcfred, in three couplets of Anglo-Saxon, engraved on the western face of the Cross at Bewcastle, in Cumberland. Alcfred died probably A.D. 664. On two sides of a similar cross at Ruthwell, in Annandale, are the following fragments of a poem on the Crucifixion. The Cross speaks:—

“God Almighty made himself ready when he would mount to the Cross,  
fearlessly before men in sight of many. . . . I raised the mighty King,  
Heaven’s Lord! I durst not bow. Men derided us both together. I stained  
with blood. . . . Christ was on the rood, yet thither nobles came in haste  
from afar to the afflicted one. I beheld all that, sore was my dole and dree.  
. . . Wounded with nails they laid Him down limb weary, they stood at His  
crossing’s head.”

On the continent of Europe, and especially among the Scandinavians, many Runic inscriptions still remain; and it is not without significance that the most ancient Runic relic yet discovered, a gold bracelet, attributed to the third or fourth century, and found at Buzeu, in Wallachia (now in the Museum at Bucharest), is inscribed GUTH ANIOD HAILAG—One Holy God.

When not carved upon stone, metal, whalebone, or other durable material, the Teutonic rune was usually cut on a piece of smoothed wood, or bark of the birch or ash. The Christian poet Venantius Fortunatus, whom Abbot Hilduin called Scholasticissimus, and who, when he said "barbarian," meant always "German," writing, at the close of the sixth or beginning of the seventh century, to a bad correspondent, tells him that if paper be scarce, he may take beech-bark; and that if he be weary of the sight of Roman letters, he may try Hebrew, Achæmenian, or Greek; or he may "write barbarous runes on ashen tables, and let the flat wand take the place of paper."<sup>1</sup> As the Latin for book was bark, liber, whence our word library, so, from the common origin of the art of writing, the Anglo-Saxon bōc, our book, meant also the beech-tree, of which the first book was a cutting. The cutting might be of any convenient sort—a strip of bark, a wood-shaving, or a cudgel. A long letter from her lover might be as much as a strong girl could carry in her arms. Among the pieces in the Exeter book, which contains fragments of

<sup>1</sup> *Barbara fraxineis pingatur Rhuna tabellis,*

*Quodque papyrus agit virgula plana valet.*—vi. 18.

I quote through, and upon this subject derive my information from, Mr. Daniel H. Haigh, whose learned and suggestive, but not everywhere convincing book, entitled the 'Conquest of Britain by the Saxons; a Harmony of the "Historia Britonum," the writings of Gildas, the "Brut," and the Saxon Chronicle, with reference to the events of the Fifth and Sixth Centuries' (London, 1861), contains an excellent chapter on "the Antiquity of Phonetic Writing as practised by the Teutonic Races." Mr. Haigh traces the runes to Woden, and makes Woden cousin and contemporary of Javan, the son of Japheth, to which end he amends the translation of Ezekiel xxvii. 19, and for "Dan also and Javan," reads "Wodan and Javan." He suspects too Japheth in the chief God of the Thracians, Zalmoxis, who is identified with Selm, who is identified with Japheth, and Salmon is the name of a fish; while the Assyrian Hca, who represents Japheth, is called "lord of the understanding" and "the intelligent fish." The student who does not assent to such reasoning will yet find much that is original and sound as well as learned in this book of Mr. Haigh's, and his companion volume on "the Anglo-Saxon Sagas."



ancient Anglo-Saxon poetry, including lines written in Runic letters, is one in which a messenger, who has brought a letter to a lady from her lover, says, "What! then he bade me entreat thee, he who inscribed (thisne béam) this beam." And again, our word teach—A.-S. *tæcan*—is from *tácon*, a sign or letter, of which the root *tác* is found in the Greek *δοκός*, and Latin *docus*—a beam. To write also, A.-S. *writan*, is a word used in *Beowulf*, the ancient Anglo-Saxon epic, to express the gash made by a knife. We might trace through many other words associated with the mechanism of books and writing the old manner and the old marvel at what seemed to the ignorant a miracle of secret signing (A.-S. *seccan*, to say; Lat. *sec-are*, to cut) or tokening. In spelling, for example, the old sense of spell was a thin chip or shaving. Tacitus tells that in Teutonic divination a rod cut from a fruit-bearing tree was divided into slips, and the slips, having marks on them, were thrown confusedly on a white garment, to be taken up with prayer to the gods, and interpreted as they were taken by the ministering priest or parent.<sup>1</sup> A special use of light cuttings for such fateful cross-readings, or "Virgilian lots," may have given to spells their particular association with the words of the magician.

The manner and the marvel of old Runic writing is thus expressed by the men who used runes in

*An ancient Anglo-Saxon Riddle.*

The obvious solution of it is that a writer—it might be a sweetheart who had many vows to send to a fair Saxon maid—took for his letter beam the stump of an old jetty:—

"I was by the sand, near the sea-wall at the ocean shore. I stood fast in my first dwelling. Scarcely was there any of mankind who saw my native soil there in its loneliness. For ever at early morn the brown wave there locked me in its sea-embrace. Little I weened that I should ever speak over mead, exchanging words without a mouth. That is a deal of wonder certainly to think of for those who do not understand such matter, how I and the knife's point, and the right hand; man's thought and the point together; push things so that I should with you, between us two alone, speak boldly my errand so that no more men had the words spoken between us two go farther to their knowledge."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Germania,' § 5.

<sup>2</sup> This riddle is from the venerable collection of Anglo-Saxon poetry, known as the 'Exeter Book,' or *Codex Exoniensis*, a folio of middle size, given, among other volumes, by Bishop Leofric, between the years 1046 and 1073, to

We have seen, then, that while civilization may lie much in books and writers, yet the very words, 'writer,' and 'book,' carry us back to the first struggle of mind out of barbarism. So, it may be observed in passing, civilization centres in our towns, and yet the very word town carries us back to the first efforts of half-barbarous man to live in a secure society. The old words for town show how universally in the old days safety, and perhaps healthiness, was sought for men's settlements by their entrenchment upon hills. The Sanscrit nagara, a city, is from naga, hill. The Latin pagus, a village, is from the Greek *πάγος*, a hill. The Russian gorad (grad), and the German gart, as in Stuttgart, meaning a city (whence also the English garth, an enclosed field, or yard, an enclosure), are from gara, a hill. The Anglo-Saxon thorpe, Frisian theorp, German dorf, a village, is from the Celtic tor, a hill. The German burg, is from berg, a hill, whence also the English borough; and from the Celtic dun, a hill or fort, we have the Angle ton, and English town.

But the Anglo-Saxons came to this country with their priests and poets, Pagan writers of runes, their warriors strong in a barbarian civilization; and while the Celts retired before them to the fastnesses of hills, they occupied and fearlessly built their towns upon the plains, they tilled. These are the people who were masters of the use of iron, and from whose grave-hillocks or barrows (so named from beorh, a hill or heap, as in Beorh-hamstede, Berkhamstead), raised, when possible, on hill-tops by the sea, there have been taken in plenty the long iron swords with which they made their conquest good. Each sword is usually almost a yard long, with a double-cutting

the Library of his Cathedral at Exeter. Bishop Leofric's library having been scattered after the Reformation, only a few volumes, including this Codex of A.-S. poetry, remain at Exeter; others are in the Bodleian or the Library of Bennett College, Cambridge. The MS. of the 'Exeter Book' is clearly written, and apparently of the first half of the 11th century. It wants the first seven leaves, some of the last leaves, several inner leaves, and has had an inkbottle spilt over an important passage near the end. It was for the first time published in 1842, by the London Society of Antiquaries, as 'Codex Exoniensis: a Collection of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, from a MS. in the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter, with an English Translation, Notes, and Indexes.' By Benjamin Thorpe.

edge and ornamented hilt, sometimes with runes inscribed on it. There have been taken also from their barrows the small girdle-knives that would serve mind or body, carving runes or cutting meat; the heads also, about a foot long, of their spears, and the long black lines of decayed wood that once were their stout shafts. The old Anglo-Saxon warriors went to their graves fully equipped, with shields laid flat over their bosoms. They were usually round wooden shields; 'yellow war-boards' their poets sometimes called them, for yellow lime-tree was the wood preferred. The wood was sometimes faced with leather, and had an iron boss riveted to its centre, with an iron handle riveted behind, the hollow of the boss taking the fighter's fist. Of the iron ring armour, the war-shirt—often mentioned in the poem of *Beowulf*—distinct traces are not found. Doubtless it was worn only by chiefs, and was too precious to the living to be buried with the dead. When *Beowulf* prepared for the contest with Grendel, and expressed his last wishes in case of death, it is noticeable that his single bequest was his war-shirt. "Best of battle-shrouds, it is Hǣdla's legacy, Weland's work," and this was, if its owner fell, a legacy thought worthy of no less a person than his great chief Hygelac, to whom it was to be sent.

With the iron work used by the men are found abundantly in these barrows the ornaments of women in wrought gold, enriched not seldom with coloured enamel, pearl, or sliced garnet; buckles, rings, bracelets, ear-rings, hair-pins, necklaces, and pendent neck-ornaments, besides the knife, scissors, tweezers, tooth-pick, ear-pick, and the frame of the housekeeping purse, all pendent from the lady's girdle. In Mercia and East Anglia the early Anglo-Saxons burnt their dead, as we read that *Beowulf* was burnt, and they gathered their ashes into coarse hand-made urns of clay. The grave of an Anglo-Saxon chief is often found to contain also the ornamented iron bands and handles of small buckets, a foot or eight inches, or sometimes only four inches, wide and deep. These probably dipped for, and carried round to the guests in the chief's hall, the ale or mead, or, as we read in *Beowulf*, "wine from wondrous vats."

What we thus take from within the barrows heaped over their dead, will help to give fresh life to at least a few tones of the voice of song that rose twelve centuries ago in the wide halls of

the Anglo-Saxon chieftains, when the clamour of their fighting men was hushed, and cups were filled and hearts were free for exultation over noble ancestry and noble deeds of arms.

Of the few remains of the most ancient Anglo-Saxon poetry—remains are few, and of no large piece is there more than a single and imperfect copy—the oldest is probably a poem in 284 lines, known as ‘The Song of the Traveller.’ <sup>The Traveller’s Song. One theory.</sup> It is a geographical detail, rather than a work of fancy, setting forth literally and concisely our old, inborn spirit of travel in the wanderings of a Gleeman, who declares that he was present at a contest of Ætla, or Attila, the Hun (?) with some Gothic tribes, and that he had visited as follower, perhaps page, of the Princess Ealhild, the court of Hermanaric, whom he calls Eormanric. Eormanric died A.D. 375, and Attila was not king till 463; the Gleeman would seem, therefore, to have composed his poem at the age of about eighty. But Mr. Edwin Guest<sup>1</sup> has observed that this ‘Traveller’s Song’ seems to have been written while the Goths were still an independent people, and that Attila, slightly mentioned, had apparently not then risen to the height of his power, and he suggests that the old poem may, therefore, have been first composed between the years A.D. 433-440. From Gothic annals Mr. Guest observes that we may ‘fix between the years 375 and 435 the Ostrogoth Hermanaric, the Visigoth Wallia, the Burgundians Gibica and Gundicarius, for whom we have in the ‘Traveller’s Tale’ Eormanric, Wala, Gifca, and Guthhere. The geography also of the poem is still that of Tacitus, and the writer seems to have been an Angle of the Continent. So says that theory.

But of all relics of the Pagan Anglo-Saxon, the most important is a heroic poem, nearly complete, and extending, <sup>as</sup> we have it, to 6357 of the short Anglo-Saxon lines, or <sup>Beowulf.</sup> half lines, as they are usually printed. The only existing MS. is in the Cotton Library in the British Museum;<sup>2</sup> it is full of

<sup>1</sup> ‘History of English Rhythms,’ vol. i., p. 76-78. London, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Cott. Vitellius, A. 15. Dr. Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury (b. 1504; d. 1575) rescued many Anglo-Saxon MSS. from among the ruins of the dissolved monasteries. They were bequeathed by him to his own University and College, where they are among the Parkerian MSS. of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Sir Robert Cotton (b. 1570; d. 1631) rescued

inaccuracy, having been written from dictation by an illiterate monk, apparently in the first half of the eleventh century. It was also much injured by the fire at Cotton House. (We must think of it, however, not as a tindery manuscript, but as a bright gleam of human light and life from the far past. The common faith is that the Pagan Anglo-Saxons brought this old heroic tale from their own country. But some reason can be shown for believing that it is of English birth, and that we need not look farther than the county of Durham, in fact to a place called Hart, near Hartlepool—for the Heorot, where stood the great mead hall, open to attacks of the strong enemy, who is represented as a monster of the fens; and that we need go no farther than to Suffolk for the court of Hygelac, whence Beowulf came. In any case, the greater part of Beowulf belongs at latest to the seventh or eighth century, and ranks as the oldest heroic poem extant, not only in English, but in any Germanic tongue.) The German “*Nibelungen-lied*,” though it incorporated, doubtless, poetry of the eighth century, belongs to the twelfth.

And now, is to be asked, what is the substance of this ancient tale? For we must know something of the text itself before we turn to its interpreters. (We enter one of the great festive halls to join at the ale-drinking and hear the gleeman’s song. The hall is long and wide, say 200 feet by 40, with a high roof and curved gables. There is at each extremity an entrance in the middle of the wall, protected by a porch, that is continued at its farther end to form cellar and pantry. We pass into the hall, a spacious nave with narrow side aisles. Pillars, dividing aisles from nave, support the central roof. The nave is the great hall itself, and down the middle of its floor run the stone hearths, upon which blaze great timber fires. At the upper end is the raised seat of the chief, at a cross-bench, where his wife, who fills the cups of the guests, and his familiar thanes, or those whom he distinguishes, sit with him. On each side of the long hearth there runs a line of tables, flanked with benches and stools, at

many more of the Anglo-Saxon MSS. newly scattered abroad, beginning to collect at the age of 18. By the fire, in 1731, in Little Dean’s Yard, Westminster, 111 MSS. were lost, burnt, or entirely defaced, and 99, including the Beowulf, made imperfect. The collection was removed to the Old Dormitory at Westminster, and then, in 1753, to the British Museum.

which sit the people who are the chief's "hearth-sharers." At the lower end, in the space corresponding to the dais, is a table for the drinking-cups. Between the rows of pillars and the outer walls spaces are parted off within the narrow aisles for sleeping-benches of the warriors. In some of the spaces are the gilded vats of liquor into which the pails of the cup-bearers are dipped. If women sleep in the hall, the recesses of the pillars behind the dais are kept sacred to them, and there are in the aisles, if the hall be the chief's dwelling, as that in *Beowulf* was not, distinct enclosures for the occupation of the family. The sleeping space behind the pillars might, perhaps, be parted from the hall by panelling and tapestry.<sup>1</sup> In such a hall the gleeman often chanted to his harp now one adventure now another, as the guests or their lord might call for this or that favourite incident, from the long rhythmical, alliterative poem, that contains the tale of

*Beowulf.*)

The long poem, divested of its episodes, is here condensed without the use of any but its own thoughts, phrases, or metaphors.

An elder *Beowulf* was for a long time the beloved king of the *Scyldings*, and from his root grew forth at last the lofty *Healfdene*. Old and war-fierce, he gave to the world four children, heads of hosts: *Heorogar*, and *Hrothgar*, and *Halga* the good, and *Ela*. Then to *Hrothgar* was given might in battle, so that his dear kinsmen willingly heard his bidding.

Through *Hrothgar's* mind it ran that he would bid men make a hall, the greatest mead-house ever known, and there within deal out to young and old all that God gave him, except the share of the people and the lives of men. Widely it was proclaimed through this mid earth to many a tribe that a Folk-stead was building. When it was ready, to this greatest of halls he who had strength in his word gave the name *Heorot*. He belied not his pledge, but dealt out bracelets and money at the feast. The hall rose high and horn-curved. There was the harp strung, loud was the song of the gleeman, who said he could tell from far back the beginning of men, and told how the Almighty wrought. The band of guests lived happily till one wrought like a fiend.

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. G. W. Dasent's valuable English edition of 'The Story of Burnt Njal; or, Life in Iceland at the End of the Tenth Century. From the Icelandic of the *Njals Saga*.' Edinburgh, 1861. The account given in this work, with drawings and plans of the old Icelandic Hall, corresponds closely to the Anglo-Saxon Hall described in *Beowulf*.

The grim guest was Grendel, he that held the moors, the fen, and fastness. Forbidden the homes of mankind, the daughters of Cain brought forth in darkness misshapen giants, elves, and orkens, such giants as long warred with God, and he was one of these. At nightfall Grendel came into the lofty house held by the Ring-Danes after their beer-drinking. He found therein a band of Athelings asleep after the feast. Grim and greedy, he was soon ready; rough and ruthless, he took in their rest thirty thanes; then he went out with the slain bodies. In the morning a whoop was upraised; the strong in war suffered; the thanes sat in sadness when they saw the track of the accursed sprite. With Grendel, strife would be too strong, too long, and loathsome. In the night following, Grendel again had sway, and so as often as the darkness came he warred against right, one against all, till empty stood the best of houses. Twelve winters' tide was his rage borne and it became openly known in sad songs that Grendel warred then against Hrothgar, would have peace of no Dane, was not to be met with money. The high and young he sought and snared. In lasting night he held the misty moors. Heorot~~he~~ he held in the swart night, with its seats richly stained, but the gift-stool [the chief's seat, whence gifts were distributed], he might not touch. Hrothgar, the Scyldings' friend, broken in mind, sat many a time in thought. Sometimes they worshipped at the holy places, prayed in words for help from the Ghost-slayer.

A thane of Hygelac's, one who was a good man among the Goths, and of his day the strongest, heard of Grendel's deeds. He bade a ship be got in gear, and said that he would seek over the swan-road the great prince who had need of men. The good thane had with him chosen champions of the Goths, the mightiest he could find; with some fifteen he sought the swimming wood. A water-crafty warrior showed him the land-marks. When the wrought stem, foamy-necked, had sped like a bird for about another day, the scámen saw land, the shore-cliffs shone, the steep hills, the wide headlands. Quickly the Weder's folk stept up on the field, tied the sea-wood, shook their war-shirts, thanked God who had made to them the wave-paths easy.

When the Scyldings' warder who had to keep the sea shores saw, from the wall, bright shields borne over the bulwark of the ship, he asked in his mind what men those were. Then went to the shore Hrothgar's thane; the mighty spear quaked in his hand; and he asked, "What weapon-bearers are ye, wearing war-shirts, who thus come hither leading over the water-street a foamy keel? I hold ward that to the Dane's land no foe may bring war by sea. Never have I seen a greater earl on earth than is one of you; he is a man worthy with his weapons, if his face tell true. Now ye fár-dwellers,—quickly tell me whence ye come?"

The leader of the band unlocked his word-board: "We are of the Goths' kind, Hygelac's hearth-sharers; my father was known widely, a high-born lord hight Ecgtheow; he abode in his house many winters ere he went on his way, almost all the wise throughout the wide earth keep him in mind. We have come through kindness to help thy lord. We have heard say that a wretch, I know not who, does to the Scyldings

The fearless warder seated on his horse then said: "A sharp shield warrior knows words from works. I hear that this is a band friendly to the Scyldings. Bear weapons forth, I show the way, I will bid also my fellow thanes, to hold against every foe your new-tarred ship until it bear back to the Weder marches, those to whom it shall be given to come whole out of the rush of war."

They went therefore; the wide-bosomed ship stood fast at anchor, heavy in the mud. They bore over their cheeks the golden likeness of a boar, fire-hardened it held life in ward. Fierce men, they went down together till they could see what was the foremost of earth's houses under heaven, all timbered, gaudy, worked with gold, wherein the rich King lived. The light of it shone over many lands. Of the warriors one turned his horse about. Now is my time to go; may the all-wielding Father keep you safe in your undertaking, I will back to the sea to hold ward against foemen."

The street was made handsome with stones, it showed the path to the men. The war-shirt shone, hard, hand-locked, the bright ringed-iron sang as they came walking to the hall in gruesome gear. Sea-weary they set broad shields, round and stone hard, against the house-wall. Then, stooping to a bench, placed in a ring their war-shirts, garb of men; the darts, the seamen's weapons, stood together, with the ash-wood grey above. Then Wulfgar a proud warrior asked the sons of strife: "Whence bear ye ye stout shields, grey shirts, fierce helms and heap of war-shafts?"

The proud lord of the Weders, answered him from beneath his helmet: "We are Hygelac's board-sharers, BEOWULF is my name. I will make known my errand to the lord, thy master, if he grant us that we give good greeting to him." Wulfgar said, "I then, the Danes' friend, will speak to the lord of the Scyldings, the sharer of rings, and I will soon make known the answer he thinks fit to give." He then turned to where Hrothgar, old and hairless, sat among his earls. He went so that he stood before the shoulders of the Danes' lord, for he knew the ways of a king's house. Wulfgar spake to his friendly lord: "Hither are come Goths from afar, the leader these sons of strife name Beowulf; they beg, my lord, to talk with you; do not deny them. They seem worthy to be gladdened with your speech and mix with earls; at least he seems so who has led hither the men of war." Hrothgar, helm of the Scyldings, said: "I knew him when a boy. His old father was named Ecgtheow, to whom Hrethel lord of the Goths gave his only daughter. The seamen who brought gifts for the Goths said, that he has in his hand-gripe the might of thirty men. Him, holy God hath in His kindness sent to us West Danes; therefore I have hope against Grendel. I shall bestow gifts on my good friend for his daring. Speed thou to bid him in, see the band gathered together as our kindred, say to them that they are welcome to the Danes." Wulfgar bore the bidding: "My doughty lord, King of the East Danes, bids me say, that he knows your worth; that ye come, welcome guests, over the sea. Now go in your war-dress to see Hrothgar, but let the war-boards and the deadly shafts abide here the bargain of words."

Then arose the mighty lord and his brave band of thanes, they hastened



together, hard under helm, until they stood at the king's hearth; then Beowulf spake, on him the war-shirt shone, the war-net sewed by the smith's cunning:—"Be thou, Hrothgar, hail! I am Hygelac's kinsman and fellow-warrior. I have undertaken many great deeds in my youth. The thing done by Grendel became known to me on my own turf; sea-farers say, that this hall, this best of houses, stands empty and good for nought after the evening light is gone. I beseech thee now, lord of the bright Danes, shielder of the Scyldings, that I alone may with this bold band cleanse Heorot. I have heard also, that the wretched Grendel recks not of weapons; I will scorn then to bear sword or the yellow round of a wide shield into the strife; but with grasp I shall grapple at the fiend, and foe to foe struggle for life. It is the lord's doom whom death shall take. I woen that he will, if he win, fearlessly eat the Goths in the war hall. Thou wilt not need to hide my head, for he will bear my flesh away to eat it in his lonely den. Care for me then no more. Send to Hygelac, if I die in the strife, the best of war-shrouds that wards my breast. That Hrædla left me, it is Weland's work. What is to be goes ever as it must." Hrothgar, helm of the Scyldings said; "For fights, friend Beowulf, and for high praise thou hast sought us. Thy father quelled for me the greatest feud, coming over the waves to the Scyldings, when I in my youth first ruled the Danes. Sorrow is me to say why Grendel shames me thus in Heorot. Full often have sons of strife, drunken with beer, said over the ale-cup that they in the beer-hall would bide Grendel's onslaught with sharp edges; then always in the morning was this mead-hall stained with gore; when the day dawned all the bench-floor was bestreamed with blood of faithful men. Sit now to the board and unscal with mead thy breast among my warriors." Then was a bench cleared in the beer-hall for the sons of the Goths. The thane who bare in his hand the bravely beset ale-cup, minded his work, poured out the bright sweet ale; at times the glee-man sang, peaceful in Heorot: there was gladness of warriors, of men great among Danes and Weders.

Hunferth spake; Ecgla's son, who sat at the feet of the Scyldings' lord. To him was the coming of Beowulf, the bold sea-farer, most irksome, because he grudged that any other man ever won more praise than himself: "Art thou the Beowulf who strove with Brecca on the sea, when ye from pride tried the fords and for foolish boast risked life in the deep water?" [More, also, in this wise said Hunferth]: "He overcame thee in swimming. He had more strength. Now I look for worse things, though thou shine ever in war, if thou durst bide a night near Grendel." Beowulf replied: "Well, thou a great deal, my friend Hunferth, drunken with beer, hast spoken about Breca. I say truly, that I had greater strength at sea than any other man. We agreed, being striplings, that we would risk our lives out on the flood, and we did thus: We had a naked sword in hand when we rowed on the deep, meant for our war against the whale fishes. He could not swim away from me, nor I from him; we were together in the sea five nights till the flood drove us asunder; the boiling fords, the coldest of weather, cloudy night, and the north wind deadly grim threw up rough billows: roused was the rage of the sea-fishes. There my body-shirt, hard, hand-locked, gave me help against the foes; my braided war-rail lay upon my breast, handsome

with gold. A painted foe drew me to the ground, a grim one had me in his grasp, yet it was granted me to reach the wretched being with the point of my war-blade. Thus often my foes threatened me. I paid them as was fit with my dear sword. In the morning wounded with thrusts they lay put to sleep in shoals, so that they have not afterwards been any let to the sea-farers. Light came from the east, the seas were still, so that I might see the headland's windy walls. The Must Be often helps an doomed man when he is brave. Yet it was my lot to slay nine nickers. I have not heard of harder fight by night under heaven's round. Breca never yet, nor any of you, at the game of war did such great deeds. Of this I boast not. Though thou hast been the slayer of thy brothers, for which thou shalt pay in Hell, Grendel would not have done such gruesome deeds in Hcorot, if thy mind were as war-fierce as thou tellest of thyself. He has found that he cares not for the strength of your folk, he slays and shends you, and expects not strife from the Gár Danes. But a Goth shall show him fight, and afterwards he shall go to the mead who may, in peace and gladness."

Glad then was the bright Danes' lord, hoary-locked and war-praised, trusting in help when he heard Beowulf. There was laughter of men, the din rose, words were winsome. Wealtheow, Hrothgar's queen, went forth. Mindful of their rank the frolic wife, gold-decked, greeted the men in hall, first gave the cup to the lord of the East Danes, bade him, dear to his land, be blithe at the beer-drinking. He gladly shared the meal and hall-cup. Then she went round, and gave on every side rich vessels to old and young, until she bore the mead-cup, bracelet-covered queen, to Beowulf. She greeted the Goths' lord, thanking God that the will had befallen her to trust in any earl for help. He, the fierce warrior, drank of the cup from Wealtheow, and then fitted for strife, spake Beowulf, Ecgtheow's son: "I meant when I went on the main that I alone would work your folk's will or baw in death under the foeman's grasp. I shall do brave deeds, or await my last day in this mead hall."

The woman liked the Goth's proud speeches. Gold-decked went then the queen of the glad people to sit by her lord, till Healfdene's son went to his evening rest. He knew that in the high hall there was to be strife after murky night came wan under the clouds. The many all arose; then one man greeted another, Hrothgar Beowulf, and bade him hail, gave him mastery of the wine-hall and said: "Never before since I could lift hand and shield have I trusted to any man the hall of the Dailcs, save now to thee. Have now and hold the best of houses. Watch against foes."

Hrothgar then went with his band of warriors out of the hall; he would seek Wealtheow the queen, his bed-fellow. Before he went he set a hall-ward against Grendel, who was to give warning when the huge Eoten came. But the head of the Goths trusted in his own might and his Maker's goodness. For he doffed his iron shirt and helm, gave his rich sword, choicest of iron, to one under him, and bade him hold the gear of war. [Then Beowulf spoke some words of pride ere he slept on his bed.] Around him many a keen seaman bowed to his hall rest. Not one of them thought he should again seek his free home, for they had heard tell

that in that wine-hall too many of the Danes before them had been taken by bloody death.

From afar came in the murky night, the Shadow-walker, stalking. The warriors slept who should hold that horned house, all but one. He, waiting for the foe in hate, in angry mood watched for the war meeting.

Then came, from the moor under the misty hills, Grendel stalking; the wicked spoiler meant in the lofty hall to snare one of mankind. He strode under the clouds until he saw the wine-house, golden hall of men. Came then faring to the house the joyless man, he rushed straight on the door, fast with fire-hardened bands, struck with his hands, dragged open the hall's mouth; quickly then trod the fiend on the stained floor, went wroth of mood, and from his eyes stood forth a loathsome light, likest to flame. He saw in the house many war-men sleeping all together, then was his mood laughter. Hope of a sweet glut had arisen in him. But it was not for him after that night to eat more of mankind. Hygelac's mighty kinsman saw the spoiler's grasp. The wretched wight seized quickly a sleeping warrior, slit him unwares, bit his bone-locker, drank his blood, in morsels swallowed him; soon had he all eaten, feet and fingers. Nearer forth he stept, laid hand upon the doughty-minded warrior at his rest, but Beowulf reached forth a hand and hung upon his arm. Soon as the evil-doer felt that there was not in mid-earth a stronger hand-grip, he became fearful in heart. Not for that could he escape the sooner, though his mind was bent on flight. He would flee into his den, seek the pack of devils; his trial there was such as in his life days he had never before found. Then was the good kinsman of Hygelac mindful of his evening speech; upright he stood, and firmly grasped at him; his fingers burst, the Eoten was outward; the earl stept further, the fiend thought to wind wide about and flee to his fen heap. The hall thundered, the ale of all the Danes and earls was spilt. Angry, fierce were the strong fighters, the hall was full of the din. It was great wonder that the wine-hall stood above the warlike beasts, that the fair earth-home fell not to the ground. But within and without it was fast with iron bands cunningly forged. There bent from its sill many a gilded mead-bench, where the grim ones fought. Over the North Danes stood dire fear, on every one of those who heard the gruesome whoop. The friend of earls held fast the deadly guest, would not leave him while living. Then drew a warrior of Beowulf's an old sword of his father's for help of his lord. The sons of strife sought then to hew on every side, they knew not that no war-blade would cut into the wicked scather; but Beowulf had forsworn every edge, Hygelac's proud kinsman had the foe of God in hand. The fell wretch bore pain, a deadly wound gaped on his shoulder, the sinews sprang asunder, the bone-locker burst, to Beowulf was war-strength given. Grendel fled away death-sick, to seek a sad dwelling under the fen shelters; his life's end was come.

The wise and the strong from afar cleansed Hrothgar's hall. Glad in his night work, the Goth's lord made good his boast to the East Danes and healed the sorrow of the land. It was a token to be seen when the beast of war laid down hand, arm, and shoulder.

Then came in the morning, as I have heard tell, many a warrior about

the gift-hall, from far and near, to see the wonder. The foe left his track as he fled, death doomed and weary, to the nickers' mere. There was the surge boiling with blood, the waves welled hot with clotted gore. Grendel had dyed it after he laid down his life in shelter of the fen. From the mere again went the glad fellow warriors proudly to ride on horses. Beowulf's praise was sung, nor blamed any the glad Hrothgar, for that was a good king. At times the war-men ran their fallow steeds in trial of the race, where the earthways were smooth. At times a king's thane, a boast-laden man, mindful of songs, knowing full many an old saga, found another high tale that had truth in it. Then he began with skill to tell of Beowulf's undertaking, well he told of Sigemund, of the Wælsings' wars and wide wayfarings—men knew not his wars and works save Fitela, who went with him. The king, also, warden of ring hoards, with a throng about him, stept from his bride-bower; and his queen, with him, measured the meadow path begirt by her maidens. Hrothgar spake (he went to the hall, stood in the fore court, and saw Grendel's hand). "For this sight give thanks forthwith to the Almighty. Lo! whatsoever mother brought this son forth, if she yet lives, let her say that the great Maker was good in her child-bearing. Now I will love thee, Beowulf, best of warriors, as a son in my heart; henceforth hold our new kinship well. There shall be no lack to thee of wealth that I can give. Often have I held worthy of part in my hoard for a less help a weaker warrior. May the All-wielder pay thee with good as He yet has done." Then was Ecgla's boasting son quieter, after the Athelings had seen over the high roof the foe's fingers. Each had before it hand-spurs, most like steel, instead of nails. The best of iron would not bite into that bloody hand.

Then was Heorot bidden to be made fresh, many men and women worked at the wine-house, the golden webs shone on the walls full of sights wondrous to the gazer. That bright dwelling, fast with bands of iron, was much broken, the hinges were rent, the roof only was sound when the wretch turned to flight. Then came the time when Healfdene's son should go to the hall, the king himself would share many a mead-cup with his warriors. Heorot was full of friends. Then the son of Healfdene gave to Beowulf a gold flag with rich hilt, a helm and war-shirt, a sword of great worth many saw borne before the warrior. Beowulf shared the cup in the court. The shelter of earls then bade eight steeds be led into the court; on one of them stood a saddle cunningly worked; that was the war-seat of the high king when the son of Healfdene played the game of swords. To Beowulf he gave all,—horses and weapons. Also, the lord of warriors gave to each of those on the mead-bench who came the sea-way with Beowulf a gift, an heirloom; and bade that the one whom Grendel slew should be paid for with gold. Before Healfdene's war-leaders the glee-wood was touched and Hrothgar's gleemen, gladdeners of the hall, told of the works of Fin's offspring, the tale of Fin Folwaling, of Hnæf and Hengest, and the sons of Hildgburh burnt by their mother at Hnæf's pile. The lay was sung, the gleeman's song, games were begun again, the noise was loud, the cup-bearers gave wine from wondrous cups. Then Wealtheow, wearing a golden crown, came forth to where the two good kinsmen sat. There also sat Hunferth, the

spokesman, at the feet of the Scyldings' lord. The Queen said: "Take this cup, dear lord, and be thou happy golden friend of men, speak to the Goths kindly. Heorot, bright hall of rings, is cleansed. Enjoy the mead of the many, and leave to thy sons folk and land when thou must forth to behold God." Then she turned towards the bench where her sons were, Hrethric and Hrothmund, where Beowulf the Goth sat by the two brethren. To him the cup was borne, and friendly bidding done, and twisted gold, two sleeves, a cloak and rings were given, the largest I have heard tell of on earth since Hama bore off the Brosings neck-ring. Wealtheow said: "Wear this ring, dear Beowulf, O youth, with all hail! and with this cloak, these riches, thrive; enliven thyself with strength, and be to these boys a kind helper. Thou hast done that which shall beget praise throughout all time as widely as the water girds the windy walls of land. Live thou a thriving Atheling, and be kind to my sons. Here all are friends." She went then to her seat. The meat was choice, the men drank wine, they knew not of a grim hereafter. When evening came, and Hrothgar had gone to his rest, many earls guarded the house, as often they had done. They bared the bench floor, it was over-spread with beds and bolsters. Filled with beer, ready for sleep, they bowed; they set at their heads the round bright shields. There, on the bench, was to be seen over each Atheling his high war-helm, his ringed shirt, and stout war-wood. It was their way to be ready for war at home, and in the host when need came to their lord their help was near.

But Grendel's mother, wretched woman—she who dwells in gruesome waters, the cold streams,—came on a path of sorrow to wreak wrath for her dead son. She came to Heorot, where the Ring-Danes were all sleeping through the hall. When in rushed Grendel's mother, the hard edge was drawn, many a broad shield lifted. She was in haste, would save herself, being thus found, and quickly seized one of the Athelings as she went to the fen. He whom she killed was Hrothgar's counsellor, his dearest friend between the seas. Beowulf was not there, for another abode had been fixed for him after the gifts to the great Goth. There was a din in Heorot. She took away the kindred hand clotted with gore.

Then was the wise king, the hoar warrior, wroth when he knew his chief thane, his dearest, to be dead. Quickly to his bower was Beowulf fetched. Hrothgar, helm of the Scyldings, spake: "Æschere is dead, Yrmenlaf's elder brother, who knows my runes, my counsellor. For that thou killedst Grendel yesternight, there is now come another mighty man-scather to avenge her son. I have heard my folk say that they have seen two such huge marsh-stalkers hold the moors, one in woman's likeness, the other Grendel. Their dwelling is the dark land where the wolf hides, by the windy pesses; the fearful fenpath where the hill-stream goes under the shades of the cliff, the flood under the earth. A mile thence the mere stands, over which hang barky groves; a wood fast by its roots overshades the water. There may be seen at night fire on the flood. There liveth none so wise who knows its bottom. Although the heath stalker wearied by hounds, the hart firm of horns, seeing that holt wood, driven from afar, will hide his head in it ere he die, that is no holy place. Thence the wave-blending rises dark to the clouds when wind stirreth foul weather, till the air grows drear and the heavens wail,

Seek the spot if thou dare. I will pay thee for the strife with money, with old treasure, as I did before, with twisted gold if thou come out of it."

[Here I may show roughly something of the manner of this and all other Anglo-Saxon poems by translating, as literally as may be, in strict accordance with its own method of versification, the next passage that tells how there was]

A horse bitted  
With curling crest,  
The careful prince  
Went worthily ;  
Warriors marched also  
Shining with shields,  
Then there were shown  
Tracks of the troubler,  
Telling plainly  
Her way through the waste,—  
As they went forward  
On the murky moor, --  
With the murdered thane  
Of Hrothgar's heroes,  
Home defenders,  
Best and bravest  
Brought to his end.  
Then they threaded,  
Athelings' sons,  
Steep, stony gorges,  
A strait road,  
Weird, narrow way,  
Wastes unknown,  
Naked, high nesses,

Nicker houses many.  
Before all Beowulf  
And some of the bravest  
Went on the way  
Wise men  
To explore the plain,  
Till, planted leaning  
Over the rough rock,  
He reached suddenly  
An unwinome wood.  
Water stood under it,  
Ghastly with gore ;  
It was grief for all Danes,  
A sight of sorrow  
For the Scylding's friends,  
A horror for Heroes,  
When the head of Æschere  
Was found by the steep flood  
Floated ashore.  
The water welled blood,  
The warriors gazed  
On the hot heart's blood,  
While the horn sang  
A doleful death note.

The band all sat. They saw along the water many of the worm kind, strange sea dragons ; also in clefts of the nesses Nickers lying. These hurried away, bitter and angry, as soon as they heard the war horn. One the Goth's lord killed with an arrow. Quickly on the wave he was, with boar-spears, sharply hooked and drawn on the ness.

Beowulf clad himself in weeds of a chief. His warbyrnie, twisted with hands, wide and cunningly dyed, must know the deeps. But the white helm guarded his head made worthy with riches, girt with lordly links, beset with the likeness of swine, that no brand might bite into it. Nor least of aids was the hafted sword, Hrunting its name, lent him by Hrothgar's speaker. Its edge was iron, tainted with poison twigs, hardened with warriors' blood. Ecglaf's son bore not in mind what he had said drunken with wine, when he lent the weapon to a better sword-wielder. Himself durst not meet death under the stir of waters. Beowulf spake, "Gold-friend of men, I am ready. If I die for thy need, be a helper to my fellow-thanes, and send, dear Hrothgar, to Hygelac the gold thou hast given me, that the Goth's lord may know I found a good bestower of rings. And let the far famed man have my sword Hunferth,

the old relic. I will with Hrunting work my doom." He awaited no answer, the sea wave took the warlike man.

It was a day's space ere he sank to ground. Then she who had dwelt in the flood, grim and greedy, for a hundred years, saw a man coming from above into the land of wonders, grasped at him and clutched the warrior. But she could not break his ring mail with her fingers. The sea wolf bore the prince of rings to her dwelling, many a sea beast with its war tusks broke his mail. Then the warrior found himself in a roofed hall, where was no water. A pale beam of firelight shone, and then he saw the ground wolf, the mighty mere wife. He struck hard with his war sword. The edge failed. The angry fighter cast upon the earth the twisted brand and trusted in his strength, the might of his hand grip. So shall a man do when he thinks to gain in battle lasting praise, nor careth for his life. Then Grendel's mother seized the Goth's lord by the shoulder. Fearless he dragged her till she bowed. She caught him quickly with fierce grasps, and threw him weary, pressed him down and drew her seax, broad, brown-edged. She would avenge her son. The braided breast-net on his shoulder withstood point and edge.

He saw among the weapons a huge bill, an old sword of the Eotens, work of giants, greater than any other man might bear forth to the game of war. The Scyldings' warrior stood up and seized the knotted hilt, fast and fierce he struck with the brand upon her neck, her bone rings brake, the bill went through her flesh, she sank on the ground. The sword was gory, the beam still shone, mild as the light from heaven's candle. He looked through that dwelling and saw Grendel lying lifeless. His huge trunk sprang far away, when he cut off the head. But then behold! that sword melted away as ice in the hot venomous blood; there was left only the hilt. Beowulf took none of the wealth that he saw: he took only the giant's head and the rich sword-hilt.

The men who were with Hrothgar looking on the water saw it mixed with new blood. They said this was a warning that the Atheling was slain. Then came the noon of day, and the bold Scyldings left the headland, sick of mood, gazing upon the mere, wishing, not weening, to see their dear lord. Forthwith he was afloat; he dived up through the water, came swimming to land, glad in the burthen he brought with him. The stout band of thanes, loosed quickly his helm and war-shirt, the stream trickled down of water stained with gore. When they went forth from the seashore, four men could hardly bear upon the deadly stake the head of Grendel.

So they came to the hall, fourteen brave Goths marching with their lord over the meadows. The worthiest of thanes came to greet Hrothgar; then Grendel's head was borne by the hair into the place where men were drinking, and the head of the woman also. Beowulf said: "Behold, these tokens from the sea we bring with gladness to thee, son of Healfdene, lord of Scyldings. Now may'st thou with thy warriors in Heorot sleep free from sorrow." The golden hilt, the giant's work of old, was given to the hoar war-leader. Hrothgar gazed on the hilt; in Runic signs the tale of its birth was told upon it. Then spake the son of Healfdene; all were silent: "Thy glory is upreared now through wide ways, Beowulf, my friend. Long shalt thou be

Many words spake Hrothgar, for he spoke of the past and of its warnings to his friend and to the folk around him. The Goth, glad of mood, went to his seat; there was a new feast made. The helm of night grew murky, the aged Scylding sought his bed, and the Goth wished for rest. The guest slept till the black raven, gladdener of heaven, blithe of heart announced the coming of the light.

The Athelings then wished to go to their own land, and Beowulf bade the son of Ecglaaf take again his sword; gave for the lending thanks, said that he held Hfrunting to be good, he would not with blame hurt pride in its good edge; that was a high-souled warrior. Hrothgar said, "Peace be to the Goths and the Gar Danes; wealth in common. Over the gannet's bath the ringed bark shall bring gifts and love-tokens. Each folk I know, fast friend, fast foe, and in the old way stainless always." Twelve gifts also gave to Beowulf the son of Healfdene, bade him go and quickly come again. The good king kissed the best of thanes, and tears fell as he took him round the neck.

The bright warriors went to the ship, laden with weapons, steeds and gold; the mast rose over Hrothgar's hoards. Beowulf gave to the boat-guard a sword bound with gold, and on the mead-bench he was afterwards the worthier for that heir-loom. They sailed away, and the known headlands of the Goths were reached. The hithe-guard who had seen them when afar was ready; he bound the ship to the sand and bade men bear to the hall of Hygelac, who dwelt by the sea-wall, the wealth of the Athelings. Kinsman faced kinsman; Hareth's daughter, violent of mood, bare the wine-cup to the high chief's hand.

Afterwards the broad land came under the sway of Beowulf. He held it well for fifty winters, until in the dark nights a dragon, which in a stone mound watched a hoard of gold and cups, won mastery. It was a hoard heaped up in sin, its lords were long, since dead; the last earl, before dying, hid it in the earth-cave, and for three hundred winters the great scather held the cave, until some man finding by chance a rich cup took it to his lord. Then the den was searched, while the worm slept; again and again when the dragon woke, there had been theft. He found not the man, but wasted the whole land with fire; nightly the fiendish air-flyer made fire grow hateful to the sight of men. Then it was told to Beowulf that his own home also, with the Goths' gift chair, was burnt.

He who had been the friend of Heardred, who while the youth lived had made him master of his crown, sought out the dragon's den and fought with him in awful strife. One wound the poison-worm struck in the flesh of Beowulf; his kinsman, Wiglaf, when all others held aloof in fear, came to the aid of the old hero, and helped him in his time of need. Then while the warrior king sat death-sick on a stone, he sent his thanes to see the cups and dishes in the den of the dead twilight-flyer. But when the dragon's gold was brought out, Beowulf thanked the Lord for all, and said, "I for this hoard have wisely sold my life; let others care now for the people's need. I may be here no longer. Bid the warriors raise a mound on the sea's headland that shall tower on Hrones-næs, that I be not forgotten, and that seafarers driving foamy barks over the mists of floods may call it in the days that are to follow Beowulf's Mount." He gave then to a young warrior, last of his kind, his war clothes and his



weapons, saying, "All my kinsmen are gone to the Godhead, earls in their valour; I shall follow them." That was his latest word.

The Goths made for him a heap upon the earth, hung with helms, shields, and bright war-shirts. In the midst they laid the beloved lord with sigh and sorrow. On the mount they kindled a great bale fire, wood reek rose swart from the Swedish pine, the roaring of flame was heard with the weeping (the wind ceased), till it had cracked with heat the bone-house on the breast. And they sang a lay of sorrow while the heaven swelled with smoke. The Weders folk wrought a mound on the hill, high, broad, seen afar by seamen; in ten days they built the beacon and begirt it with a wall. In the mound they set rings and all the riches taken in the hoard. All that great wealth of the earls they gave back to the earth, that there might be gold in the dust beside the body of the warrior. And round about his mound rode his hearth-sharers, who sang that he was of kings, of men, the mildest, kindest, to his people sweetest and the readiest in search of praise.

Of the verse measure used by the Anglo-Saxons, the simple features will be found represented in the imitative Anglo-Saxon alliteration. fragment which forms on page 261 part of the preceding sketch. The length of the lines and their rhythm varies, but each line must contain at least two emphatic syllables: few lines have less than four syllables, two emphatic and two unemphatic; some have eight or nine, or even more. Germans who study Anglo-Saxon, differ from the usual custom of the English and the Danes by reckoning each couplet as a single line. The Anglo-Saxons themselves in their MSS. made no division into lines. Much dependence is placed in all Anglo-Saxon poetry upon alliteration for the mark of emphasis. Whatever draws attention to a word, whether elevation of voice, pause, recurrence of final sounds or of initial letters, creates emphasis. But to good literature it is necessary that the words thus pressed upon attention be those which, by right of their sense, most need it. In accordance with natural rule, which at once makes itself felt when it is broken, the alliteration of the Anglo-Saxon poet was established. Of the pair of short lines in a couplet, the first has the initial letters of the two chief words alike, in the second the one most emphatic word begins with the same letter. The alliteration in the first line is said technically to be of the two sub-letters, for the fullest emphasis of awakened attention falls on the word in the second line, which opens with the third, or what is for its situation called the chief letter. In just accordance with the principle of this manner of marking emphasis, words

with a prefix have the alliteration fixed on the essential part of the word, as in the couplet of our imitation:

“ An unwinsome wood,  
Water stood under it.”<sup>1</sup>

Their own rule of alliteration was not always strictly kept by Anglo-Saxon poets, though often enough kept to the letter to make its principle one that might fairly be deduced and stated. The spirit of it is in all cases adhered to. Avoidance of identity of letter was the rule in alliterating vowels. Throughout the Period of the Formation of our Language this, then, is the one national old Teutonic metre. It is the metre of those other Teutonic remains the Old High German ‘Hildebrandslied,’ the ‘Wesserbrun Prayer,’ the Muspilli verses on the ‘Day of Judgment,’ and the Old Saxon ‘Heliand,’ or ‘Song of the Redeemer.’ It is probable, however, that in the rhythmical system of the Anglo-Saxons there was a varying harmony between thought and expression of which a rule like this gives no proper account. Mr. Guest complains<sup>2</sup> that in printing Anglo-Saxon MSS. editors have too freely, by change of accent, composition, and resolution of words, fitted the printed text to an accepted theory, and dealt at discretion with insertions or omissions of the points they find among the words of verses written without other marks of division, and with these often imperfectly supplied.

(And now, how much is history, how much romance, in the old poem of Beowulf? It contains historical episodes and allusions on which scholars have exercised their ingenuity with various effect since the text was first printed by the learned Icelandic Grim J. Thorkelin, in the year 1815. Attention was first called to the Manuscript by Sharon Turner, who gave some extracts and translations in his ‘History of the

<sup>1</sup> Or as in the couplet that next follows in Anglo-Saxon:

“ Wynlēase wudu,  
Wæter under stod  
Dreórig and gedrefid;  
Denum eallum wæs, &c.”

<sup>2</sup> ‘English Rhythms,’ vol. ii. pp. 9-17.

Anglo-Saxons,' and in his account of the work was misled by a transposed page of the MS. into regarding Beowulf as the enemy of Hrothgar. Thorkelin gave with the text an interpretation of his own. The incidents of Grendel and the Dragon he considered to be Scandinavian myths, originally connected with Boe or Boav, called in Latin Bo-us, the son of Odin. The short history of this hero is told by Saxo Grammaticus in the third book of the 'History of the Danes.' It contains nothing like the story of Beowulf, except that it is there said of Bo, as of Beowulf, that he was buried under a great and famous barrow.<sup>1</sup> Thorkelin having identified Beowulf with a Bo, afterwards, as Mr. Conybeare observes,<sup>2</sup> identifies him with the second syllable in Hroth-wulf, being equally glad to take the wolf without a bo. Mr. Conybeare himself gives in his 'Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry' the first complete English account of the poem, with numerous specimens of the original, to which he supplies translations into English blank verse and literal Latin, adding to his account a list of Thorkelin's misreadings from collation of the Copenhagen edition of Beowulf with the original MS. at the British Museum. Thorkelin, however, is perhaps less to blame than Admiral Nelson. He had made his transcript in the year 1786, and had it ready for press, with a translation, when his literary work of thirty years was destroyed by the bombardment of Copenhagen. He was urged by the liberality of the Danish Privy Councillor Johan Bülow, of Sanderumgaard, to begin

<sup>1</sup> Bo's barrow has been sought by antiquaries, and said to be at Horlef, near Tryggeveld, in Iceland, where there was a corroborative inscription which the late Dr. Peter Erasmus Müller, Bishop of Iceland, and editor of Saxo Grammaticus (his work having been completed since his death by Dr. J. M. Velschow) declares to have been written certainly not before the 14th century. Dr. Müller notices a Jutland hill called Bui, at Lyngø, in the district of Skanderburg, with a royal barrow (Köngs hœ) near it. But he warns his readers that there are 600 barrows scattered about Denmark, called for their size royal. Bui may, he thinks, answer to the Icelandic Bua-stein, a hill haunted by spectres. The only kings with a name like Bui are a Bögi (bogie), and an avaricious Bökus, who was consumed by Rolvo. (Saxo Gramm. Hist. Dan. Ed. Müller et Velschow (Havniæ, 1858) Vol. II. Proleg. et Not. p. 124.)

<sup>2</sup> 'Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry,' by John Josias Conybeare, M.A., &c., successively Professor of Anglo-Saxon and of Poetry in the University of Oxford. Edited by his brother, William Daniel Conybeare, M.A., &c.

afresh; and his edition of *Beowulf*, published in 1815, was the result.

It was at the cost of the same nobleman that the Danish scholar Nik. Fred. Sev. Grundtvig published in 1820 his free Danish translation of *Beowulf*. The same scholar has lately dedicated to the same patron an edition of the text, which he had studied in the original MS. when in England between 1829-31.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1833, a new edition of the text of *Beowulf* was published by Mr. John M. Kemble.<sup>2</sup> A prose translation, with a glossary, was published four years afterwards in a companion volume; and this contained, in a Postscript to the original Preface and in the Appendix, Mr. Kemble's latest and fullest opinion of the meaning of the poem. He considered *Beowulf* to belong essentially to the poetical cycle of the Angles, and to be founded on legends which existed previous to the Angle conquest. *Beowulf* himself he presumed to be originally the name not of a man but of a god, one of Woden's ancestors, represented throughout in this poem "as a defender, a protecting and redeeming being." The relationships given to him are accounted for "by the necessity of bringing him into the legend." *Beowulf* belongs to the Geáts or Goths, but Geát or Gaut was the parent of a tribe called by Procopius *Γαυτοί*. A Gothic verb gives the præter. *gáut*; the Anglo-Saxon *geótan* gives *grát*; both words with the sense of pouring. Was not Geát, then, the god of abundance, Odin? For the *Edda* says that Gaurr was Odin's name among the gods. Hrothgar and Halga Mr. Kemble identified with Hroar and Helgi, Danish kings actually reigning in the fifth century. But in his second Preface the same scholar says, "Although I will not raise Hrothgar and his brother to the rank of gods . . . yet I must observe that any attempt to assign historical dates to these, or almost any other princes, before the introduction of

<sup>1</sup> 'Beowulfes Beorhaeller Bjovulf's-Drapeu, det Old-Angelske Heltegedigt, paa Grund-Sproget, ved Nik. Fred. Sev. Grundtvig,' Kiöbenhavn, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> 'The Anglo-Saxon Poems of Beowulf—the Traveller's Song and the Battle of Finnes-burh—edited together with a Glossary of the more difficult words, and an Historical Preface,' by John M. Kemble, Esq., M.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge. London, 1833. The volume is a delightful little Heft, printed by Whittingham, and published by the late Mr. Pickersail. According to a bad fashion among antiquarians for the cr rarity, there were only 100 copies printed.

Christianity . . . . leads to nothing but confusion. . . . All that part of my Preface which assigns dates to one prince or to another, or which attempts to draw any conclusions from dates so assigned, I declare to be null and void, upon whatsoever authority those dates may pretend to rest." Mr. Kemble's arguments would, in fact, go far to transport Beowulf altogether to the land of dreams.

Next, there appeared in 1839, and of the same school of criticism, without text, a mythological, historical, German analysis of Beowulf by H. Leo. The first German translator of Beowulf, Ludwig Ettmüller,<sup>1</sup> who ascribes the work on his title-page to the eighth century, proposes also to show that the legend of Beowulf was originally a myth, and says of himself, "In general I follow Mr. Kemble." He places the Geats in Sweden, and considers the term *Weder Goths*, which occurs often in Beowulf, to be equivalent to *weather Goths*, meaning Northern Goths, because out of the north came the bad weather. This critic is, I think, the first who observes, what is worth observing, that neither the name *Angle* nor the name *Saxon* occurs once in the whole poem. In 1849 a translation of Beowulf into English verse by Mr. A. Diedrich Wackerbarth<sup>2</sup> was prefaced by another argument upon the meaning of the poem, in which, after describing the first Beowulf as a son of Odin, if not Odin himself, the writer says, "I believe with Mr. Kemble that he is really the same mythical person."

In 1855 appeared Mr. Thorpe's edition of Beowulf, text and translation, with a short Introduction and a Glossary; and this is the very serviceable edition now commonly used by English students. Mr. Thorpe's opinion here expressed is that the poem is "not an original production of the Anglo-Saxon muse, but a metrical paraphrase of an heroic Saga composed in the south-west of Sweden, in the old common language of the North, and brought to this country during the sway of the Danish dynasty."

In 1859 Dr. Karl Simrock appended a claim for Beowulf as a German Mythos to his German translation of the work. Dr.

<sup>1</sup> *Ed. Beowulf: Heldengedicht des Achten Jahrhunderts.* Zurich, 1840.

<sup>2</sup> *'Illustration of an Epic Poem, translated from the Anglo-Saxon into English &c., successively by Wackerbarth, A.B., Professor of Anglo-Saxon at the Oxford. Edited by Oscott.'* London, 1849.  
London, 1826.

Simrock says that if Mr. Thorpe gives Beowulf to the Swedes, he must give them also, as he does not, the 'Traveller's Song' and the 'Fight at Finnesburgh.'

The latest interpreters of Beowulf—Dr. Grein and Mr. Haigh, a German and an Englishman—discover in the poem more evidence of a historical foundation than had usually been admitted. Dr. C. W. M. Grein, of Cassel, is probably the best Anglo-Saxon scholar now in Germany. Certainly he is the scholar who has done most service to the student, for he has lately distinguished himself as editor of the completest and compactest body of Anglo-Saxon poetry that has hitherto been published, a "Library" in two volumes, to which he is adding a Glossary,<sup>1</sup> Anglo-Saxon and Latin, that promises to be a full incorporation of existing knowledge on its subject. In a late number of a German quarterly, devoted to the study of literature in the Romance languages and English,<sup>2</sup> there is an article by Dr. Grein on the historical element in the poem of Beowulf, which he agrees with others in considering to have been written in the beginning of the eighth century at latest. Dr. Grein thinks that the mythical adventures are ascribed to a historical person. The two populations mentioned in the poem are the Danes, over whom Hrothgar ruled, and the Geats or Goths, who were ruled by Hygelac, and from among whom Beowulf came to Hrothgar's help. The Danes are called in the poem, without

<sup>1</sup> 'Bibliothek der Angelsächsischen Poesie in Kritisch bearbeiteten Texten und mit vollständigem Glossar, herausgegeben von C. W. M. Grein.' (Cassel and Goettingen, 1857-61.) Text 2 vols. Glossary in course of publication. Two parts are published, extending from A to the end of G. The texts include Beowulf, Cadmon, and all that is most valuable in the Exeter Book. Dr. Grein has also, in a separate work, translated the chief remains of Anglo-Saxon poetry into German alliterative verse, in two volumes, entitled, 'Dichtungen der Angelsachsen Stabreimend übersetzt.' (Göttingen, 1857-59.) The student who does not desire English translation with his texts, may, at no great cost, set up, in Grein's two volumes, a library of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Of the Anglo-Saxon text of Beowulf alone, Grundtvig's recent Danish edition (Copenhagen, 1861) is the latest, best, and cheapest.

<sup>2</sup> 'Jahrbuch für Romanische und Englische Literatur unter besondere Mitwirkung von Ferdinand Wolf, herausgegeben von Dr. Adolf Ebert, Professor an der Universität Leipzig.' (Leipzig.) Vierter Band, Drittes Heft April to June, 1862. A journal that contributes most substantial aid to a sound study of literature.

apparent distinction, Sea Danes, East, West, South, and North Danes, also from their armour Ring Danes, from their Ring-mail, Gar Danes from their spears, or Bright Danes from their shining panoply.

The Danes also are called Scyldings, from the founder of their dynasty Scyld Scefing, or Scyld, the Son of the Skiff. The old myth was that on a boat laden with arms and treasure a child was floated to the Danish coast, and the Danes being then in great trouble accepted the boy as sent them by the gods, made him their king, and under his lead established and extended their power. When, after a long reign, Scyld died, his body, placed again on a ship laden with arms and treasure, was set adrift upon the sea; and no man ever heard or knew whither that vessel went. Scyld may have been a real warrior, who brought help to the Danes against their tyrant Heremod, established his own dynasty among them, and left his son, the elder Beowulf—not he of the poem—to succeed him.

Dr. Grein considers that the poem treats of actions done among the Danes in Denmark. The latest English critic, we shall find, places the scene wholly in England. Each writer identifies Heorot (which means a hart) with a place so called on a spot tallying exactly with his theory. The true seat of the Danish kingdom, says Dr. Grein, was the island of Sælland, on which, in fact, at this day Copeñhagen stands. Now on the east coast of Sælland, over against Sweden, not far to the south of Helsingor, and opposite the Island of Hveen, there is a town about two miles from the sea called Hjortholm, or in German Hirschholm—Hartholm; that might be Heorot; and a little more inland there is a lake, the Siæl Lake, that might be Grendel's Lake; from which a stream flows by Hjortholm to the sea. Here, then, Dr. Grein fixes the site of Heorot. Where does he find the shore of Hygelac, King of the Geats or Goths, whence Beowulf came to Hrothgar's aid? This he agrees with Mr. Thorpe in finding on the opposite coast of the mainland, and a little to the north, in Swedish Gothland, and he indicates as the probable neighbourhood of Beowulf's grave the ruined castle of Bôhús, Bo-house, built in 1308 upon a rock, where the mouth of the Gotha divides, to enclose the island of Hisingen. This Bôhús gives to its township the name of Bohuslæn; upon the

island also is a *Biörlanda*; but *Biarr*, says Dr. Grein, is an old northern form connected with the name of the *Seylding* *Beowulf*. The identification of this continental Gothland and the neighbourhood of the River *Gotha* with *Hygelac's* kingdom, is partly supported by the fact mentioned in the poem—that *Hygelac's* predecessor and brother *Heathkynn* was engaged in a desperate war with the King of the *Svéons* in *Sveorice*, now *Svearice*, or *Svealand*, lying immediately to the north of Gothland. We have also, apparently, one tangible corroborated fact to give us a date for the reign of *Hygelac*. In four passages of *Beowulf*<sup>1</sup> there is mention of an expedition of plunder made by *Hygelac* with *Beowulf* in his train against the *Frisians*, when *Hygelac*, being opposed by the *Hetware*, the *Hugas* and the *Frisians* fell in battle, and “the king’s life departed into the grasp of the *Franks*,” *Beowulf* and the rest of the *Geats* only saving themselves by swimming to their ships. Can this be any other than the descent recorded by *Gregory of Tours* and the *Gesta Regum Francorum*, as having been made in the year 511 by the *Dane* *Chocilagus* upon the coast of the *Frankish* *Hattuarii*, whose allies and neighbours were the *West Frieslanders* as far south as the mouth of the *Maas*? There is record also from the tenth century of a tradition then ascribing immense bones on an island at the mouth of the *Rhine* to “*Huiglaucus*, King of the *Geats*,” who was there slain by the *Franks*. This historical parallel had been pointed out by *Leo* and *Ettmüller*. Conceding mythical origin to the stories of *Grendel*, of the swimming-match with *Breca*, and of *Beowulf's* battle with the dragon, Dr. Grein argues that such myths are attached to persons who were really living in the early years of the sixth century, and that, besides the few traces of fact that have been in the main story overlaid by fable, there are in the episodes distinct and not unfaithful records of fragments of history, that were brought into this country from *Danish Sæland* and from *Gothland*, on the neighbouring coast of the *Swedish* continent.

On the other hand, thus runs the substance of the strong argument of Mr. Haigh, who has lately claimed for *Beowulf*:



a purely English origin,<sup>1</sup> as the composition of a Northumbrian Scóp familiar with the scenes described, and acquainted with men who had known the heroes of his story. Mr. Haigh also accepts the coincidence between the poems of Beowulf and Gregory of Tours' 'History of the Franks' on the subject of the death of Hygelac, as evidence for the historic character of that ancient heroic song. Sceafa, Scyld, Beowa, and other names, were not confined to single persons. There are several Scylds in the Scandinavian genealogy, and it may be that they all, including the Scyld of the poem, derived their name from the popularity of the original hero. Beowulf is not necessarily Beowa; but if Scyld and Beowulf did repeat Sceldwa and Beowa, that is not more remarkable than that there should have been in the eighth century two contemporary Eadberhts, each the son of an Eata. That Scyld, Beowulf the first, and Hcaldene, reigned in Northumbria, as, it is argued, Hrothgar certainly did, is not improbable. Reckoning the generations back, Scyld must have been living about the time when there is known to have been an immigration of Saxons. Simeon of Durham speaks of a Scythles-cestre, Roger of Howden of a Scylte-cestre, by the Wall, a name that seems to contain that of Scyld, which we have to this day in the neighbouring North and South Shields. North of the Wall again, in the same neighbourhood, is Shilbottle—Scyldes-botl—the palace of Scyld; near at hand also is Bolton on the Alne, the Bolvelaunio of Ravennas, which seems to contain the names of Beowulf and Alauna. Hrothgar's mead-hall Heorot, Mr. Haigh fixes at Hart, in Durham. Its situation, two miles from the coast, agrees (like that of the Sæland Hjart-holm) with the distance of Heorot from the shore, as indicated by the description of the march to it after Beowulf's landing. But that is not all. Grendel's mere, to be found "by the way where the hill-stream goes under the shade of the cliffs," was said by Hrothgar, speaking at Heorot, to be a mile thence, over-shaded with bushy groves: "there liveth none so wise who knows its bottom." Just a mile from Hart there was until lately a

Anglo-Saxon Sagas; an Examination of their value as Aids to  
 Sequel to the History of the Conquest of Britain by the Saxons.  
 Haigh. London, 1861.

large pool, called the Bottomless Carr, now turned like the fens into arable land, from which a stream, still called How (mountain) Beck, flows through the parish of Hart into the slake of Hartlepool. In the following lines concerning the mere, "although the heath-stalker wearied by hounds, the hart firm of horns, seeking that holt-wood, driven from afar, will hide his head in it ere he dies," there seems also to be a reference to the story from which the name of Hartlepool arose, as represented on the common seal of the borough, a hart, standing in water, attacked by a hound. Then as we read on of the "naked highnesses, nicker-houses many," we are reminded of the coast of Hartlepool and its wave-worn caves. But that is not all. At Hart there are traces of an ancient fort, and near it is an enclosure called the Palace Garths. There is no record of any residence at Hart by the historic kings of Northumbria. But the Palace Garths near the old fort would answer to the site of Heorot by Hrothgar's fortress. There is reference, moreover, in Beowulf and in the 'Traveller's Tale,' for which also an English origin may be argued, to an attack on Heorot by the heards under Wythergild, Frodo, and Ingeld, his son. In the neighbourhood of Hart traces of such a battle have been found. Near the north-western end of the slake of Hartlepool a number of graves, eight feet square, have been found filled with human bones. In one grave were the bones of a hundred and fifty men of tall stature. Again, we may have trace of Ingeld's principality in the three Inglebys, the Ingleton and Ingleborough of the neighbouring county of York, and of the Wycings and Beards in Wycliffe, Bartin, and Barforth. As for the destroying chief who is represented by the monster Grendel, he also has left the mark of his name behind him. It is certainly the name of a man. There is a Grendlesmere in Wiltshire, and a Grindlepytt in Worcestershire, a Grindleton in Yorkshire, and Crindale dykes on the Roman wall, near which are Grindon loch and Grandy's knowe. Near Hart there is a parish named Grandon and Grandy's Close, with close to Grandy's Close, Thrum's Hill, the Giant's Hill.

Beowulf the Scylding is said in the poem to have reigned at the Seodelands, at Seedenig, which Dr. Grein identifies with the Scandinavia of old geographers, Schonen, the southernmost

part of the Scandinavian peninsula. But Mr. Haigh observes that Mr. Kemble has rightly translated "Scedelandum," "the divided lands," Sceadan and Sundrian having the same meaning, to divide or sunder, and these Scedelands appear to be represented by the modern Sunderlands, of which one is on the coast of Northumberland, north of Shilbottle.

Then if we look for the kingdom of Hygelac, the son of Hrethel, who ruled over the Weder Goths, we find, perhaps, traces of the Suffolk Weders in two Suffolk Wetherdens, and Wetherheath, Wetherup, and Wetheringsett, with a Wetherby hundred in the adjoining county of Cambridge. We may suspect Hrethel's family name in the Suffolk Redl-ing-field, and traces of himself at Rattlesden and Rattlerow Hill (Hrædla hræw, Hrethel's corpse), which may have been his place of burial. A mile distant from one of the Wetherdens is an ancient Anglo-Saxon fortress called Haughley, in which are at least the H, g, l, of Hygelac. There is also a Hoxne, which has been called Hoxton, and Eglesdon, and is called by Leland, quoting a life of St. Eadmund, Hegilesdune,—*quasi* Hygelācesdune,—and this place is only four miles from Redlingfield and not far from Uggeshall, perhaps once Hygdeshall, Hygd being either another name of Hygelac, or the name of his queen. Even details of the deadly war of Hygelac with Ongentheow, King of the Sweofolk, may be faintly traced in local names on our own soil. The first battle was fought at Raven Wood. There is a Ravenhill near Whitby, on the coast of Yorkshire, and the adjacent Robin Hood's Bay may be a corruption of Raven Wood. There are remains of entrenchments to the south of this neighbourhood called War Dyke, and to the east called Green Dyke; six miles to the north-west is a village of Uggelbarnby, which seems to contain the name of Hygelac, and may mark the scene of the second battle, close to it has been a place called by the name of Breca, one of Hygelac's neighbours, and twenty miles farther to the west is Roseberry Topping, a lofty hill, with a complete circle of large pits around its conical summit, which may recal the name of the fortress of Hreosnabeorh, in which Ongentheow defended himself after his battle with Hygelac, and defence of which he died.

That Ongentheow is called King of the Sweos, does not decide

whether his people were a Swedish settlement in England, or were still inhabitants of Sweden.

The period was the close of the fifth century or beginning of the sixth, and if Hygelac was confederate then with Garmund the war against the Britons, we might have, as we do, on the scene of that war a Hygelace's *git*<sup>1</sup> near Clifton in Somersetshire, a Hucklecote near Gloucester, and Hugglescote near Chorley, in Leicestershire. Even that descent of Hygelac, A.D. 511, on the island at the Rhine mouth is quite as traceable to the Suffolk Hygelac as to a Dane from the continent of Scandinavia. Hygelac's son is called Hereric's nephew. Chararic, who might be Hereric, and the brother of Hygelac's queen, was a Frank king, who had been treacherously slain by Chlodovech, who then reigned in his stead. The Garmund just mentioned made, therefore, with Isambard an expedition against Chlodovech, and Hygelac's descent on Theoderic's adjacent territory may have been a detached part of the same unsuccessful enterprise of vengeance. The evidence is by no means exhausted. Hygelac's wife is said in the poem of Beowulf to have been the wife of that Offa whom Matthew of Paris, writing in the thirteenth century, makes in England the son of Warmund, King of the West Angles, who repaired and gave his name to Warwick. To the theory which places the scene of the poem in Denmark and Sweden it is absolutely necessary that this Offa should be carried off to the original home of the Angles. But the story of Offa, as told in the poem of 'Beowulf' and the 'Traveller's Tale,' has also its strong confirmation attached to our English soil. The fabled history tells that Offa was blind till his seventh year, and deaf and dumb till his thirtieth, when he recovered all his faculties under the pressure of danger from the chief Alewih, who sought to usurp his right of succession. The forces of Offa and Alewih met on the opposite banks of a river named Avene, and fought by missiles till Offa crossed, and the enemy suffered a great defeat, according to the 'Traveller's Tale,' by the border of Fifield. There was honourable burial given to the nobles, and the rest of the slain were buried under a great heap of stones, which received, therefore, the name of Qualmhul.

(Slaughter Hill). The battle-field was called afterwards Blodewald. Now Fifield in Oxfordshire is separated from Gloucestershire by the river Evenlode (Avene of the poem); there is no Blodewald, but the parish next Fifield, on the other side of the river, is Bledington, and three miles west of Bledington there is to this day Slaughter Hill, giving its name to two neighbouring parishes as well as to the hundred. The bodies of the nobles were buried apart. In the immediate neighbourhood are two parishes, called Upper and Lower Swell. Swell means a burning, a funeral pile. The name occurs only in one other part of England, in Somersetshire, also near an ancient battle-field. In digging foundations for enlargement of the church of Lower Swell, a long deep bed of ashes was discovered in the churchyard, and of eleven barrows in the parish the largest is called Picked Morden—selected slain. The field in which it stands is called Camp-ground. History records no battle but that of Offa on this spot. Overcome in this battle, Offa's opponent fled and was pursued, and, after a second fight, perished in the Rigan-burn. A stream flowing into the Stour near its junction with the Avon, was afterwards known as Rugganbróc, and nearly in direct line between Fifield and Rugganbróc, near Chipping Campden, we have a place called Battle Bridges. Alewih's name is in the Warwickshire Alveston, a place directly north of the stream in which he perished, which may, therefore, have been the fort of his own to which he was flying; there is also an Alveston in Gloucestershire, and in Oxfordshire an Alvescott. This, in corroboration of the written record, is strong evidence against taking the first husband of Hygelac's wife out of England.

We return now to Beowulf, at the court of Hygelac. Let us assume that the great swimming-match with Breca, Prince of the Brondings, was a rowing-match, in which Beowulf was victor. Beowulf is said to have reached the shore of the land of the Fins, Breca to have landed at Hæthoræmis, whence he sought his dear territory, the land of the Brondings. Beowulf and Breca, then, must have been neighbours. About ten miles from Hrethel's abode, or Rattlesden, we have Breckley, bearing, perhaps, the name of Breca, and in the same county, Bransfield, Brandeston, Brantham, and Brandon, may indicate settle-

ments of the Brondings, or clans of Brand or Brond. Of the Fins there is no trace on the coast, but two Finboroughs, not far from Rattlesden, appear to show that there were Fins here, neighbours, if not subjects, of Hrethel.

From the descriptions given in the poem of Beowulf's voyage out and home to Heorot, Mr. Haigh suggests that Uggeshall in Suffolk, about five miles inland, was Hygelac's royal residence, and Covehithe, of which the name indicates an ancient harbour, Beowulf's place of embarkation. Thence to Hartlepool the distance is about 220 miles, a distance that might be accomplished in the specified time, the adventurers reaching the court of Hrothgar on the second day. At six miles an hour, rather below the speed of the fishing cobles on the Yorkshire coast, Beowulf and his companions would, at seven or eight o'clock in the morning of the second day, be opposite Cromer, and then steering direct for Hart, within sight of Flamborough Head, they would make their way to the Cliffs of Hartlepool, on which Hrothgar's coast-guard was stationed, disembark on the sands, and march two miles on the road to Hart or Heorot. On their home voyage they would descry the well-known cliffs of the Goats in the highlands between Lowestoft and Southwold.

After Hygelac's fall we are told in the poem that Beowulf's reign was disturbed by war with the Mere-Wiwings, or Sea Wiwings, people of Wiwa, whose name occurs at Wiveton in Norfolk, and who founded the kingdom of the East Angles early in the sixth century. Recently arrived, and settled at first on the coast, they were Beowulf's neighbours, and the contest with them ended in their absorption of his little state. He then went to the scene of his old fight with Grendel, and ruled over the Scyldings, dying in an encounter which, whatever its nature, is said to have taken place on Earna Næs, Eagle's Cliff. There is a promontory so named south of Hartlepool, about fifty feet high, nearly surrounded by the Tees. Finally, if the barrow raised over the dead hero on the sea headland called Hrones-næs, was to be known by seamen as Beowulf's Mount, it looks something like identification that Hron's name may be preserved in Runswick, a village near Whitby, having four miles to the north of it a lofty sea headland, that may well have been

Hrones-Næs, for on it is the village of Bowlby, an easy contraction of Beowulfes-beorh.

Although some of the details, taken by themselves, are insignificant, and argument from local names has always to be received with extreme caution, there is undoubtedly great cumulative force in that plea for assigning to the poem of Beowulf an entirely English origin, of which the chief points have here been stated.

Together with Beowulf, we may claim also as wholly our own the fragment of the Traveller's or Gleeman's Tale, in which "Widsith spake, unlocked his wordhoard," and which has been accounted the work of a continental poet who was witness of the wars of Attila the Hun. Here also Mr. Haigh endeavours to show by evidence of local names that England was the scene of a great part of the poet's wanderings. The date of his travel is fixed between A.D. 511-534, by his mention of the reign of Theoderic, the son of that Chlodovech against whom Garmund, and perhaps Hygelac, made their fatal expeditions. The Traveller's Eormanric is identified by this course of argument with the father of Ethelbert, first Christian king of Kent. Ætla would not be the great Attila of history, though he might be, with the same name, a chief of the same people; for we have in Norfolk and Suffolk an Attlebridge and Attleborough, in the same district with a Hundon, a Hunworth, and a Huncote.

Another ancient Anglo-Saxon fragment from the Pagan times is the 'Lament of Deor,' also preserved in the 'Exeter Book.' Deor, in his trouble, reflects that as Weland and Beadohild, Geat and Mæthhild, Theoderic and Eormanric's people, had conquered their griefs, so might he. "Weland," he begins, "knew in himself the worm of exile. The prudent chief endured sorrows; had grief and weariness, winter-cold wretchedness for companions; oft experienced misery; after Nithhad had laid him, unhappy man, in captivity with a tough sinew-band. Her brother's death was not so sore in mind to Beadohild as her own affair," &c. The continental story in the 'Edda' is that Nithhad attacked Weland, the great armourer, for his wealth, carried him off to an island, and made him work for him. But Weland killed Nithhad's sons, gave a narcotic to his daughter

The Lament  
of Deor.

Beadhild, and escaped, leaving her pregnant. Weland was the old word for a smith; but we have English traditions of Wayland Smith, including a Cromlech in Berkshire, called Wayland's smithy, and as these ancient Anglo-Saxon Sagas are older than any Scandinavian or Teutonic romance on the same themes, we may believe that Weland himself, who made Beowulf's war-shirt, came to England with one army of the invaders. Six miles from the Berkshire "Wayland's smithy" are the Nythe farms, whose name reminds us of his enemy Nithhad. In this way, in fact, Mr. Haigh argues, "Weland, Nithhad, Geat, Mæthhild, Theoderic and Eormanric, may all be traced in the district in which Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire meet, and all lived in the fifth or sixth centuries." Of himself Deor says, naming as the successful rival who has won from him the substantial friendship of his chief another Scóp, who is celebrated in several Teutonic Sagas:

"A sorrowing one sits deprived of happiness; in his mind it grows dark; he thinks to himself that his share of woes is endless. Then he may think that the wise had changes enough throughout the world. To many a chief he dispenses honour, constant success; to others a portion of woe. That I will say of myself, that I was for a while the Scóp of the Heodenings, dear to my lord. Deor was my name. I had a good following, a faithful lord, for many winters; until that now Heorrenda, a song-crafty man, has obtained the land-right, which the refuge of warriors gave to me before."

These pieces are in the 'Exeter Book.' Another fragment of heroic Anglo-Saxon poetry, containing part of a descrip- The Fight at Finnesburg. tion of the Fight at Finnesburg, was found in the seventeenth century by Dr. George Hickes on the cover of a MS. of Homilies in the library at Lambeth Palace. The volume has been doubtless since rebound and the old cover destroyed, in ignorance of its great value. The fragment was published by Hickes in his 'Thesaurus of old Northern Languages' (1703-5), and is part of a poem on the same "peril of Fin's offspring," which forms an episode of the tale told at the feast after Beowulf's conquest of Grendel. Fin was a prince of the Frisians; and the rush and stir of the life of the past that aroused a quiet antiquary by its cry from the cover of a sober book of semi-Saxon Homilies in an old library, was this:

"... never burn. Then cried aloud the warlike young king, 'This dawns not from the East, nor flies a dragon here, nor are the horns of this hall



burning; but here it blazes forth. The birds sing, the crickets chirp, the warwood resounds, shield answers to shaft. Now shines the moon wandering among clouds. Now arise deeds of woe that the hatred of this people will do. But wake up now, my warriors, hold your lands, remember your valour, march in rank, be of one heart.' Then arose many a gold-deckedthane, girded him with his sword. Noble warriors went to the door; Sigferth and Eaha drew their swords, and at the other doors Orllaf and Guthlaf and Hengist himself turned on their track. Then yet Garulf reproached Guthhere, that he, so joyous a soul, bore not arms to the hall's door at the first instant, now that a fierce enemy would take it. But above all, the fierce warrior asked openly, 'Who held the door?' 'Sigferth is my name,' quoth he; 'I am the Secga's lord, a warrior widely known. I have suffered many woes, hard battles. Which-ever thou wilt seek from me, is here decreed for thee!'. Then was the din of slaughter in the hall. The keeled board should \* \* (the sword) they took in hand to break the bone helm. The burgh floor resounded until Garulf, Guthhere's son, fell first of earth-dwellers in the fight. The corpses of many good foes were about him. The raven wandered, swart and sallow brown. The sword-gleam stood as if all Fin's burgh were on fire. Never have I heard of sixty conquering heroes who better bore them at a conflict of men, nor ever requite song or bright mead better than his young warriors requited Hnæf. They fought five days, so that none of them, of the noble comrades, fell, but they held the door. Then the wounded hero went walking away. He said that his byrnie was broken, his war dress weak, and also that his helm was pierced. Then the guardian of his people quickly asked him how the warriors had recovered from their wounds, or whether of the young men——?"

Another heroic fragment, in two detached pieces, has been lately found by Mr. George Stephens, of Copenhagen, upon two leaves of an Anglo-Saxon Saga. In these Guthhere appears again. In the first piece Ælfhere is being reminded of his valour as Ætla's van warrior, and assured of success against Guthhere, whose attack has been unjust; in the second Guthhere and Waldhere parley before fighting. These are parts of the Waldhere's Saga paraphrased by Gerald of Fleury in Latin hexameters in the tenth century.

In this fragment we find the sentiment, that "He who trusteth himself to the Holy, to God for aid, he there readily findeth it." But such passages, like the few Christian passages in *Beowulf*, are probably interpolated by the later copyist of the old song of valour shown in greed and rapine. For the poetry is clearly that of men among whom right was to the strong, and whose religion was faith in an iron destiny. "What is to be goes ever as it must," is the last thought of *Beowulf's* speech, when offering to risk his life for pay in Hrothgar's service; and again he says, "the Must Be often helps an un-

Waldhere's  
Saga.

The spirit of  
Anglo-Saxon  
Paganism.

doomed man when he is brave." The brave deeds are done from no high spiritual motive, but for gold and gifts. It was the suggestive praise always offered to a prince that he was liberal in giving. For all that he did, Beowulf was promised substantial payment, and was substantially paid. Before his adventure at the mere he took thought for his gold, saying, "Send, dear Hrothgar, to Hygelac the gold thou hast given me, that the Goth's lord may know I found a good bestower of rings." And what was done, was not done modestly. The coarse insolence of Beowulf's social self-assertion against the *Gar Danes* who are feasting him and against *Hunferth*, whom he also reminds over the ale-cup that he is the murderer of his own brothers, is received as a common part of heroism by all who are concerned. Hrothgar was glad, for he "trusted in help when he heard Beowulf;" and of Hrothgar's queen *Wealthew*, we are told that "the woman liked the Goth's proud speeches." No chief retained more than he could hold by his own sword: and the poet who sang the valour of his chief, if he would know good days, must not stint of his celebration; or, as befel the lamenting *Deor*, another came whose song pleased better, and the chief plundered back what he had given to one poet that he might enrich the favourite who had supplanted him.

## CHAPTER VI.

THERE is another side from which to note the temper of the Anglo-Saxon mind, yet ignorant of the best truth and honour. If their Pagan theology had not taught our forefathers to labour in this world by self-denial for a happiness beyond the grave, so neither had it taught them to affect a spiritual aim in living selfishly. If the hero fought and the bard sang for food and fee, plainly and honestly they made it appear that they did so. "Let us eat and drink," they said, "for to-morrow we die." The best that their gods promised for them after death was that they should go on eating and drinking. The warrior was undisguisedly a tradesman in his sword—the poet in his song. What each desired he took if he could get it; but his motives were as open as his deeds. The practical mind of the Anglo-Saxons never throughout their history has worked for any but substantial ends, and what end could it seek in those days but the conquest of material advantage? Theirs was a mind that marched straight towards its purpose, and spoke plainly. It may be said that there is in the unmixed Anglo-Saxon an imagination with deep roots and little flower, solid stem, and no luxuriance of foliage. The gay wit of the Celt would pour into the song of a few minutes more phrases of ornament than are to be found in the whole poem of Beowulf. For example, in the death-song of Queen Meav over her husband Cuchorb,<sup>1</sup> there are six similes in eight successive lines, while in the six thousand three hundred and fifty lines of Beowulf only five similes have been discovered, and these are rather natural expressions than added ornaments. A gliding vessel is compared to a bird; Grendel's eyes are compared to fire; his nails to steel; a light in his dwelling is likened to the sun; and the melting of a sword bathed in his blood to the melting of ice. That which

<sup>1</sup> Quoted on page 181.

it was in the poet's mind to say was realized first, and then uttered with a direct earnestness that carried every thought straight home to the apprehension of the listener. The 'Traveller's Song' conveys the sense of travel through a matter-of-fact compendium of political geography. And not only did the strength of this old poetry consist in its deep realisation by a thoughtful earnest mind of all the incidents described; the very words employed were often realised by practical analysis into that form usually called metaphorical, which is as common as the use of simile is rare. Thus the rocks of the coast are "the windy land-walls;" the sea is "the water-street," "the whale-road," or "the swan-road;" a ship is a "wave-traverser," or "the floating wood," the "floater foamynecked," or "the sea-wood;" the chief's chair is "the gift-stool;" his retainers are his "hearth-enjoyers;" night is "the shadow-covering of creatures." Such phrases are but loosely defined as metaphors, since it is of the essence of true metaphor that a word should be used aptly in some other than its direct sense, and even in these phrases the Anglo-Saxon poets were still in their own practical way putting the plain word for their thought. The very few true metaphors in *Beowulf* are as simple as the similes: there is the boiling flood, and there are "sorrow's boilings." We read of a ship's neck, of her bosom, of earth's bosom; its door is the hall's mouth; Grendel's nails are his handspurs; the war-horn sings; the sun is the candle of the firmament, and heaven's gem. We have bonds of thought, burning anger or longing; the net of treachery; the bite of swords; the flower of the Goth; the embrace of fire or flood, or it is said "fire shall devour;" Grendel's mother is the seawolf; the "word's point breaks through the treasure of the breast;" heroes are "war-beasts," and Hrothgar is "helm of the Scyldings." There are few more examples of true metaphor in the poem; and all but five or six are metaphors so common and natural to human language, that it would have needed more use of imagination to avoid them than to use them for direct expression of a thought.

The people of Holland have retained to our own day, little changed, this type of character. Both Dutch and Anglo-Saxons, when the seed of Christianity struck root among them, mastered the first conditions of a full development of its grand truths with

the same solid earnestness, and carried their convictions out to the same practical result. Holland indeed has been, not less than England, with England and for England, a battle-ground of civil and religious liberty. The power of the English character, and therefore of the literature that expresses it, lies in this energetic sense of truth and this firm habit of looking to the end. Christianity having once been accepted, aided as it was greatly in its first establishment among us by the zeal of the Gael and Cymry, who were in this country the first Christians, the Anglo-Saxon writers fastened upon it, and throughout the whole subsequent history of our literature, varied and enlivened by the diverse blending of the Anglo-Saxon with the Northman and the Celt, religious energy has been the centre of its life. We lay our hands now, therefore, upon the main thread of our story when we speak of those who first preached Christianity in Britain.

The Clement whom Paul names as one who had been a fellow-labourer with him at Philippi,<sup>1</sup> is, according to Origen,<sup>2</sup> the same who was afterwards Bishop of Rome. In the third place after the Apostles, says Irenæus in his 'Church History,' the episcopal office was held by Clement, who also saw the blessed Apostles and lived with them. The same Clement wrote two Epistles to the Corinthians, which were of so much authority in the early Christian Church, that they are included in the most ancient MS. text of the Greek Scripture that this country possesses, the Alexandrine Codex, ascribed to the fourth century, given by Cyril Lucar, once Patriarch of Alexandria, to Charles I. in 1629. In the first of these Epistles Clement says, in speaking of St. Paul, "Seven times he was in bonds; he was whipped and stoned; he preached both in the East and in the West, leaving behind him the glorious report of his faith; and having taught the whole world righteousness, and having travelled even to the extreme boundaries of the West, he suffered martyrdom by command of the Prefects." From this mention of travel to the extreme boundaries of the West, it has been inferred that Paul himself visited Britain: for Britain was in the geography of that day the extreme island of the West, and Josephus makes Agrippa say to the Jews who sought war

Christianity.  
The sowing  
of the seed  
Was Paul in  
Britain?

<sup>1</sup> Ep. to Philippi, iv. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Comm. on John i. 29.

with Rome at about the time of St. Paul's martyrdom, "Gades is the limit of the Roman power on the West; nay, indeed, they have sought another habitable earth beyond the ocean, and have carried their arms as far as such British islands as were never known before." A few later expressions still more general than this of Clement, which is itself coupled with the general assertion that Paul "taught the whole world righteousness," are all the evidence to be adduced in support of the theory upheld by some that St. Paul was the first who brought the tidings of the Gospel to this island.

Tertullian,<sup>1</sup> arguing in the year 208 that all nations have believed in Christ, says that "those places of Britain inaccessible to the Roman arms are now subdued to Christ." Origen, who died A.D. 253, says in one Homily,<sup>2</sup> that "the power of our Saviour's kingdom reached as far as Britain, which seemed to lie in another division of the world." And Dorotheus, who is supposed to have been a Presbyter at Tyre or Antioch towards the close of the third century, when he wrote a Synopsis of the Life and Death of the Prophets and of the Apostles and Disciples of Jesus Christ, says that "Aristobulus, one of the seventy disciples, whom St. Paul mentions in Romans, taught the doctrine of salvation, and executed the office of Bishop in Britain." Heleca, Bishop of Caesar Augustus, in an ancient fragment quoted by Archbishop Usher,<sup>3</sup> says also that "Britain was renowned for its many martyrs, and chiefly for Aristobulus, one of the seventy-two disciples, who was sent as Bishop to Britain, and martyred in the reign of Nero." Eusebius,<sup>4</sup> in the beginning of the fourth century, says that "Christian teachers passed over the ocean to those which are called the British;" and Chrysostom,<sup>5</sup> towards the close of the same century, says that "the British islands, which lie beyond the sea and are in the very midst of the ocean, have felt the power of the word, for there churches and altars have been erected." Here is, at least, evidence enough of the early preaching of the Gospel in this country.

In support of the belief that Britain was visited by Aristobulus

<sup>1</sup> *Adversus Judæos.*

<sup>2</sup> The 6th on the 1st chapter of Luke.

<sup>3</sup> *Brit. Eccl. Antiq. c. i.*

<sup>4</sup> *Evangel. Demonst. iii. 7.*

<sup>5</sup> *In lib. Quod Christus sit Deus, contra Jud. atque Gent.*

in the lifetime of St. Paul, if not by St. Paul himself, we have the Cymric legend contained in the Triads<sup>1</sup> that Bran the Blessed, son of Llyr Llediath, and father of Caradog (Caractacus), was seven years a prisoner in Rome as hostage for his son, betrayed through the enticement, deceit, and plotting of Cartismandua; and it was Bran who brought to this island from Rome the faith of Christ. The Genealogy of the Saints of the Isle of Britain names as the four missionaries who accompanied Bran to Britain, after his release, "Ilid, Cyndav and his son Mawan, men of Israel, and Arwystle Hen (the old), a man of Italy." A farmhouse, called Trevran, in Glamorgan, has been pointed out as the site of Bran's residence, and the neighbouring church of Ilid Llandid is called the oldest church in Britain. Arwystle the old is considered to have been Aristobulus. Caractacus was in Rome A.D. 51, being, as Tacitus writes, nine years after the war in Britain broke out. The seven years' imprisonment of Bran would bring his release to the year 58—the year when St. Paul, also released, went into Spain. Aristobulus, who is said to have been one of Bran's Christian companions as preachers to his countrymen, legend declares to have been the first Bishop in Britain, and to have died at Glastonbury A.D. 99. In harmony with these traditions is a theory that the Pudens and Claudia, mentioned by St. Paul at the close of his second letter to Timothy ("Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens and Linus and Claudia, and all the brethren") are the Pudens and Claudia mentioned by Martial,<sup>2</sup> as a young Roman officer married to a British lady, Claudia Rufina, daughter to Cogidubnus, king of Clichester, at whose court he found shelter after shipwreck. The lady may be supposed to have come to Rome with Pomponia, wife of Aulus Plautius, legate in Britain A.D. 43-52. Pomponia was accused in the year 57 of the taint of foreign superstition; she might therefore, perhaps, have shared the faith of Claudia and Pudens, and have been active with them in sending, on the return of Bran in the year 58, a mission into Britain.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Triads 18, 35.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. iv. ep. 13; Lib. xi. ep. 54.

<sup>3</sup> The legend of Joseph of Arimathea's coming to Glastonbury, and other traditions of the early British church, may be read in Archbishop Usher's 'De Antiquitate Britannicæ Ecclesiæ.' The arguments against it, with

In the very short fourth chapter of his ‘Ecclesiastical History,’ Bede having copied from Orosius a complication of erroneous dates and names to mark the period—“In the <sup>The tradition of King Lucius.</sup> year of our Lord’s incarnation 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made Emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus,”—adds, naming Eleutherus, who was twelfth Bishop at Rome between the years 176 and 190, “In their time, whilst Eleutherus, a holy man, presided over the Roman Church, Lucius, king of the Britons (who died A.D. 201), sent a letter to him entreating that, by his command, he might be made a Christian, and the effect of the pious request soon followed. The Britons kept the faith they had received in quiet peace inviolate and whole until the times of Diocletian.” To this doubtful King Lucius is, of course, ascribed the foundation of several churches, including St. Martin’s at Canterbury, and St. Peter’s, Cornhill, or even Westminster Abbey and Winchester Cathedral. Bede farther tells that the persecution of the Christians by Diocletian, the tenth since the reign of Nero, was “maintained incessantly for the space of ten years, with burning of churches, proscriptions of the innocent, slaughters of martyrs. At last it exalted Britain with the frequent glory of devout confession of the martyr’s faith in God.”

The first British martyr is said to have been Alban, taught by a Christian preacher whom he had sheltered, and in <sup>Alban.</sup> whose place he gave himself up to the pursuers. Alban was scourged and is said to have been beheaded on the 22nd of June, in the year 305. Bede tells with unquestioning faith that on the way to the place of execution—Holnhurst, near the city of Verulam—the bridge over a river being covered by spectators, the water dried up to make way for Alban; that his appointed executioner desired, thereupon, not to slay but to dio

the argument for St. Paul’s having visited Britain, and much more on these early questions, are fully given in Jeremy Collier’s ‘Ecclesiastical History.’ Venantius Fortunatus, in the sixth century, proves an opinion to have been then extant (*Vita St. Martini*, lib. iii. *carm.* 5) that St. Paul came himself to Britain.

*Transit oceanum, vel quâ facit insula portum  
Quasque Britannus habet terras, quasque ultima Thule.*



with him; and that when another man struck off the saint's head, together with the head that man's eyes dropped upon the ground.

After Diocletian put off the purple in the year 305, the Church in Britain was left to its own natural development, until in later years it suffered from the influx of the Pagan Anglo-Saxons. In the year 314, Constantine being then Emperor, born in Britain, the son of Constantius by a British mother, three British Bishops—Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelfius, Bishop “*de civitate colonia Londinensium*”<sup>1</sup>—subscribed among those present at the first Council of Arles. This is the Constantine of whom it is told that when in 312 he was marching against Maxentius, who ruled in Italy, and praying for success prayed also for certainty as to his faith, he saw in the heavens a bright cross, with the inscription *In Hoc Signo Vince*, and being thus and by a corresponding dream converted, took for the symbol on his standards the letters I. H. S. Zosimus, no Christian, tells that Maxentius had on that day the adverse portent of a flight of owls. At the Council of Rimini, in the year 359, the Bishops being lodged and fed at the Emperor's charge, those of Gaul and Britain chose rather to live independently on their own means, except three Bishops out of Britain, who were too poor to do so, and would rather be subsisted by the Emperor than feed upon the brethren.<sup>2</sup>

The Church in Britain, consisting chiefly of native missionary monks and their converts, who occasionally made pilgrimages to Jerusalem or went to Rome, is said to have begun about this time to form itself into choirs or corporations, of which the chief received the name of Ban-gor, or Ban Cor, high choir. One was in Bardsey Isle, founded by Cadvan at the end of the fifth century. One in Flintshire, on the borders of Cheshire, was known as Bangor Iscoed, that is, under the wood; and is said to have grown to such importance that it contained at one time two thousand monks, who lived by their own industry, presided over by an abbot, and with a subordinate

<sup>1</sup> Supposed by Jeremy Collier to be a misreading of Colony of the 11th Legion.—‘*De Civ. Col. Leg. XI.*’

<sup>2</sup> Sulpicius Severus, *Hist. Sacr. lib. ii.*

ruler over each of their seven sections. To this community the earliest British ecclesiastical writer—Morgan, Latinized Pelagius—is often said to have belonged; but, in fact, Pelagius wrote a hundred years before the Bangor College was, at the beginning of the sixth century, established by Dunod. Morgan, originally Morgant or Morcant, means in Cymric a sea-brink, or, as a man's name, one born by the sea-shore. This was Latinized into Pelagius by the amiable and learned man, who, between the years 394 and 415, was maintaining that which Augustine and the great body of the Church opposed as the Pelagian heresy. It is probable that the British Morgan, or Pelagius, was not otherwise a monk than as men were in his day called monks who led within their own houses stricter lives than their neighbours, studied the Scriptures, and taught others the promises of God. Pelagius travelled to Rome, where, says Augustine, he “lived very long and kept the best company.” He saw the sack of Rome by Alaric; and soon afterwards set sail to Carthage, then another great centre of Christian civilization. From Carthage he travelled into Egypt, and thence to Jerusalem, where he again settled.<sup>1</sup> He was an old man in the year 401; for he complained of his age when he then published at Rome his commentaries; and being in the East, where probably he died, he wrote letters to Rome from the council of Diospolis in 415. Several of his works remain among those of Augustine and Jerome. One of his letters,<sup>2</sup> describing Alaric's sack of Rome to the nun Demetrias, will express much of his character.

*“Alaric at Rome.”*

“‘This dismal calamity,’ he says, ‘is but just over; and you yourself are a witness how Rome, that commanded the world, was astonished at the alarm of the Gothic trumpet, when that barbarous and victorious nation stormed her walls, and made their way through the breach. Where were, then, the privileges of birth and the distinctions of quality? Were not all ranks and degrees levelled at that time, and promiscuously huddled together? Every house was then a scene of misery, and equally filled with grief and confusion. The slave and the man of condition were in the same circumstances, and every-

<sup>1</sup> August. de Gestis Palest., cap. xxii.; De Peccat. Orig., cap. viii. 21; Contra Pelag. cap. xxii.

<sup>2</sup> Inter August. ep. 142. I quote this through, and take what I have said thus far of Pelagius from, the Eccl. Hist. of Jeremy Collier.

where the terror of death and slaughter was the same; except, we may say, the fright made the greater impression upon those who got the most by living. Now, if flesh and blood has such power over fears, and mortal men can frighten us to this degree, what will become of us when the trumpet sounds from the sky, and the archangel summons us to judgment; when we are not attacked by sword or lance, or by anything so feeble as a human enemy; but when all the terrors of nature, the artillery of heaven, and the militia, as I may so speak, of God Almighty, are let loose upon us?"

What was condemned as the heresy of Pelagius was thus summed up by the church of Carthage, against one of Morgan's disciples, in twelve articles of prosecution:—1. That Adam was mortal. 2. That the rest of mankind was not being punished for his sin. 3. That the Law had saving promises as well as the Gospel. 4. That there were some men who lived without sin before the coming of our Saviour. 5. That infants are not born wicked or accursed. 6. That Adam's disobedience is not the cause of natural death, nor our Lord's resurrection the reason for our resurrection. 7. That it is conceivable for a man by his own effort to keep God's law and live innocently. 8. That rich men could not be saved by baptism unless they parted with all their estate. 9. That the assistance or grace of God is not granted specially for every moral act; created powers, divine teaching, and liberty of will, being sufficient. 10. That grace is given in proportion to our works. 11. That only those without sin can be called the sons of God. 12. That by our own effort we must overcome temptations.

The opponent of this Cymric teacher was the Saint Augustine of the primitive church, not he who is reputed to have first brought Christianity to Britain. This Augustine was born in Numidia, A.D. 354, the son of a Pagan father, and of Monica, a Christian mother, and he says in his 'Confessions' (vii. 9), that by the books of the Platonists he was, after many doubts, at last prepared for an appreciation of the sacred Scriptures. His piety was ardent. 'He sold his family estates, and distributed to the poor all that he had beyond the means of a simple maintenance. The sack of Rome by Alaric (A.D. 410), which occurred while he was in Africa, and which led Pagan philosophers to reproach Christianity with having failed in bettering the world, caused Augustine to write his best work, 'De Civitate Dei.' Not long afterwards he became the great antagonist of the Pelagians; but

here, and in all his numerous controversies with the Manichæans, Donatists, &c., there was joined to the earnestness of profound conviction that Christian candour towards those he opposed, of which we have seen example in his concession of honour to the private character of Morgan or Pelagius. Augustine's mind had passed through many changes to its point of strong antagonism against the doctrines of the Cymric writer. Tracing everything to divine grace, he now, says Dr. Neander,<sup>1</sup> "sought for the attainment of faith a foundation in the secret absolute decrees of God, according to which one was chosen and another not." In a work written A.D. 397, he derived all good in man from divine agency, and said, "God, out of compassion, chooses some to whom He imparts divine grace, *gratia efficitur*, which operates upon them in an irresistible manner; but yet in accordance with their rational nature, so that they cannot do otherwise than follow it. The rest he leaves to their merited perdition." "The Christian faith," said Augustine again, "properly consists in what relates to two men; one by whom we are sold under sin, the other by whom we are redeemed from our sins." Morgan, on the other hand, whose doctrines I cannot describe more fairly than in the dispassionate words of a modern writer who dissents from them,<sup>2</sup>

"Regarded the creature as endowed with the powers of its existence and left to itself; hence the moral nature has likewise its powers, in order to fulfil its destiny; these faculties belong to it as an inalienable possession, and can suffer no essential alteration. It depends on man himself to make use of these powers. In reference to Goodness, Pelagius distinguished a *posse*, a *velle*, and an *esse*. The *posse* comes from God; the *velle* and the *esse* are man's affair. That the eye can see, is a gift of God; to see ill or well depends on ourselves. Thus, God has imparted to us the ability for goodness—whether we perform it depends upon ourselves. Accordingly, the essence of virtue consists in the free application of our moral powers—in this lies the *meritum* of man, without which there is no virtue. With this also is connected the definition of Free Will—the ability, at every moment, of doing good or evil. . . . Augustine ascribed great importance to the first sin, as an act by which man's pure moral nature was separated from communion with God. Pelagius, on the contrary, lowered the moral importance of the first sin; he could not imagine that this single act could exert so great an influence on the develop-

<sup>1</sup> 'History of Christian Dogmas,' translated by Mr. J. E. Ryland, in 2 vols. of Bohn's Standard Library.

<sup>2</sup> Neander's 'Christian Dogmas,' ed. cit. pp. 360-363.

ment of the human race. . . . According to the Pelagian representation, the consequences of the first sin were rendered less important for Adam himself, because he was awakened to repentance by the punishment. The Free Will remained in him as in his posterity, equipoised between Good and Evil; death was regarded by Pelagius as founded in human nature as such. He was willing, indeed, to grant, that the first man, if he had not sinned, might have been spared from suffering it, by a special privilege, but in itself it was the law of his nature. And not the less were the maladies of human nature founded on it, and could not be attributed to Adam's transgression. On the other hand, Augustine taught that death had its origin in the discord which arose through sin between man and God, and in its consequences in human nature. Guilt and the punishment of sin, with all other evils, has passed over to the whole development of humanity. In Adam the whole human race sinned and became estranged from God, a *massa perditionis*."

The extant writings of this most ancient Cymric theologian are 'Commentaries upon Paul's Epistles,' a '*Libellus Fidei ad Innocentem I.*,' preserved among the works of Jerome, his letter offering to Demetrias, a nun, the model of ascetic life, and fragments from his writings upon 'Nature and Free Will,' preserved among the works of St. Augustine.

Although Morgan himself was in the East, his doctrine spread among the British Christians, and a mission was sent Germanus. from Gaul of two bishops, Germanus of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, who reached Britain in the year 429, and preached, not only in churches but in fields and highways, against the Pelagian doctrines. A public disputation was also held at Verulam, where, says Bede, "the people gave sentence in their acclamations, shouted for Germanus and Lupus, and could scarce command their temper so far as to forbear beating the Pelagians." The bishops from Gaul remained, and are said to have enabled the converted Britons to put to the rout at Mold, about ten miles from Chester, an army of attacking Saxons and Piets, by the loud shout of Hallelujah from an ambush among echoing rocks. After the return of the French bishops to France, Pelagianism spread again, and Germanus, now accompanied by a bishop named Severus, returned for a time to Britain.

During this time the Patricius, known as St. Patrick, had Saint Patrick. been diffusing Christianity among the Gaels of Erin. He was born of a Christian family, A.D. 372, near the chief town of Breatan, Dumbarton, on the north bank of the

Clyde, at a place now known as Kilpatrick; and his British name was Succath. When eleven years old, he was taken by his parents, with his brother and five sisters, to live near the relations of his mother in Brittany. There, at the age of fifteen, he was seized, with two of his sisters, by pirates, who carried him to Erin, and, his sisters being carried to another part of the island, sold him as a slave to Milcho, petty Prince of Claneboy. By Milcho he was kept for seven years, during which time he learnt the language of the country, employed as a swincherd. After seven years' service he was released, and although made prisoner again for two months, escaped to his family. At the age of thirty he travelled through Gaul and Italy to Rome, where he studied with two pious Irish monks, Kiaran and Declan. In their company he returned. He is said to have been ordained deacon by his mother's uncle, Martin of Tours, and to have been ordained priest by Germanus.

Erin and the opposite coasts and islands of Alban were not then without preachers. Small communities of Christian missionaries called Culdees—either as *cultores Dei*, <sup>The Culdees.</sup> worshippers of God, or, according to the Gaelic, Keila Dia, servants of God, or Keledi, inhabitants of the religious Kil, cell or retreat—supplied from an early time some of the most earnest and laborious diffusers of religious truth. Ninian, who is said to have lived at Witherne, on the coast of Galloway, preached to the Picts, of whom Gildas said that before their conversion they had “more hair on their faces than clothes on their bodies.” After eight years' labour, driven, A.D. 420, to Erin by their violence, Ninian is said to have built a monastery at Clonconnor before returning to his Picts. In southern Erin Alba and Declan had, it is said, founded a religious house at Ardmore, near Waterford, and Kiaran another at Sierkeran, or Saigre, in King's County. In the year 431, Pope Celestine named Palladius, a deacon of Rome, bishop in northern Erin; but Palladius was ejected by the King of Leinster, within whose dominions he endeavoured to establish a sacerdotal order. Abandoning, then, his mission, Palladius died among the Picts on his way home, and Succath, the Irishman's St. Patrick, on hearing of his death, besought that he might be sent to preach in his place. Succath was ordained bishop, and received, as missionary bishop, the

clerical name of Patricius, to indicate his noble birth. He arrived in Erin in the year 441, being then almost seventy years old, and his first convert is said to have been Sinell, King of Leinster. Fifty years of labour are, then, assigned to St. Patrick; for tradition keeps him alive until the 17th of March, A.D. 493, when it is said that he died at the age of 120, and was buried at Downpatrick. Saint Patrick is said to have been assisted in his mission by a Cymric prince named Caradog; to have established in Ulster the abbey of Saul, on the site of a large barn named Sabhall, in which he preached; and to have founded, A.D. 445, the monastery and cathedral of Armagh.

The seat of the primacy of the old British Church was at St. David's, formerly Menevia, whither the David who is called Apostle of the Welsh, an austere and able priest of the school of the Egyptian monks, son of a Cymric prince, and uncle to King Arthur, had, early in the sixth century, removed from Caerleon the seat of the Archbishopric, upon his own appointment to that mission by the Synod of Brovi.

The Irish Church retained its chief position after Patrick's death. In the year 563, Columba, an Irish abbot of royal descent, after founding monasteries in the north of Ireland, passed, with twelve companions, into Scotland, at the age of forty-one. For thirty-four years from that time he laboured as a missionary on the mainland and in the Hebrides, where his chief residence was in the island of Iona, called from him Icolumbkille. Iona then became the head-quarters of a great society, which had monasteries in Scotland and Ireland; and which differed in several respects, as, indeed, the whole British Church differed, in points of discipline, from the Church of Rome, the Church of Ancient Britain being upon some points in noticeable harmony with Christian churches of the East.

It was a priest of Leinster, Columban, who, six and twenty years after the settlement of Columba in Alban, settled and taught in Burgundy, where he disputed upon points of discipline with Popes of Rome, and set above the Church of Rome that of Jerusalem. Turned out of Burgundy by Theodoric II., after twenty years of residence there, Columban went through Switzerland to Italy, and one of his Gaelic followers, who had been his pupil from boyhood, being compelled

by illness to remain behind in Switzerland, founded, in 614, the monastery which bears his name of St. Gall. It is he who is now honoured as the apostle of the Swiss. <sup>Gall.</sup>

It is quite possible that in Britain the successes of the heathen Anglo-Saxons caused many of the discomfited Cymry to turn from the preaching of the monks, and led to that partial revival of the paganism of the Cymry, which is described as Neo-Druidism. <sup>Neo-Druidism.</sup> Stonehenge, of which the stones, mortised and tenoned into one another, are so arranged as to indicate the sun's amplitude at the summer solstice and the elevation of the north pole, may, as well as the similar stones in Brittany, be a form of structure raised upon Teutonic prompting,—fifth-century monuments of a modified heathenism.<sup>1</sup>

When the Anglo-Saxons were established firmly in the plains, Britain again was regarded as a heathen country. In the year 596, four years after his accession to the <sup>Augustine.</sup> bishopric of Rome, Gregory I. sent into this country the mission of that Italian Augustine who is known as the apostle of the Saxons, and the first Archbishop of Canterbury. Augustine and his companions landed in the following year on the isle of Thanet, which was assigned to the missionaries by King Ethelbert, the king having been influenced in their favour through his Christian Frankish wife. By the end of the year Augustine had baptised ten thousand persons.\* He was then consecrated at Arles Archbishop of the Anglo-Saxons, and he fixed his see at Canterbury, where he died in the year 604. Heathen temples were by Augustine's action on the policy of Gregory converted into Christian churches; heathen festivals and customs were transformed also into Christian holydays. The Cathedral church at Canterbury was founded on the site of a Pagan Roman temple, so was old St. Paul's, and so was Westminster Abbey. But Augustine, regarding as an essential part of Christianity the Roman Church's time of holding Easter, the Roman view of the rebaptism of heretics, the Roman form of ordination, marriage service, tonsure, and other Roman ceremonials, differing from those usual among the Christians of the Cymry and of the Gael,

<sup>1</sup> See on this subject the Hon. Algernon Herbert's 'Cyclops Christianus,' London, 1849; and his 'Britain after the Romans.'



laboured to override the consciences of those who should have been his native fellow-workers. The Cymric clergy, whose chief centre of life was the monastery of Bangor Argoed, in which a rule was maintained resembling that of the monks in the Thebais of Egypt and other parts of the East, were told by Augustine that "in case they would not join in unity with their brethren, they should be warred upon by their enemies; if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should at their hands undergo the vengeance of death."<sup>1</sup> A few years afterwards Etherfrith, the Saxon king of Northumberland, having advanced his army against the Cymry to the neighbourhood of this Bangor, observed the unarmed priests praying apart for their nation, and caused them to be first attacked and massacred. Twelve hundred are said to have fallen, and it was after this event that the community of British priests was removed to the present Bangor in Caernarvonshire.

It was at about this time that the Christian poet Cædmon, who has often been called the Anglo-Saxon Milton, was born in the same region to which we have seen the old heroic song of Beowulf traced.

It is said by Nennius, that the conversion of King Edwin and his subjects in Northumbria, in the year 627, was achieved by Rum, the son of Urien. Urien had been murdered in Lindisfârne not quite fifty years before, and might well have left behind him a young son who embraced Christianity, and went, as others went, to Rome, where he studied, received as a priest the name of Paulinus, and was one of the most fit men to be sent back as a missionary to the Cymry.<sup>2</sup> He was sent from Italy by Gregory in the year 601, and at first probably aided Augustine in Kent. In 617 Ethelfrith, the murderer of the monks of Bangor, was himself killed in battle, and then Edwin became king. Eight years afterwards the pagan Edwin sought in second marriage the Christian Ethelburga, daughter of Ethelbert, the king of Kent, who had been converted by Augustine. In pressing his suit Edwin promised not only freedom of

The Church  
in Northum-  
bria.  
Paulinus.

<sup>1</sup> Bede, 'Eccles. Hist.' lib. ii. cap. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 'History of Northumberland,' by John Hodgson Hinde. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1858.

Christian worship to her, but that he would himself listen to the arguments for Christianity. Paulinus went with Ethelburga as a missionary to the North, and was consecrated bishop of the Northumbrians. Edwin, fortunate and victorious, and encouraged by the missionary to believe that Christianity provided him with his successes, listened in council to the preacher. Coifi, a chief priest of the old religion, declared for the new. The old was without virtue; for, he argued to the king, "not one of your people has worshipped our gods more diligently than I, yet many are more prosperous in all their undertakings." Then stood up an old Earl, who is reported to have said,—

"The life of man, O king, seems to me, in comparison with that which is hidden from us, to be like the sparrow, who, in the winter time, as you sit in your hall with your thanes and attendants, warmed with the fire that is lighted in the midst, rapidly flies through, to seek shelter from the chilling storms of rain and snow without. As he flies through, entering by one door and passing out by another, he has a brief escape from the storm, and enjoys a momentary calm. Again he goes forth to another winter, and vanishes from your sight. So also seems the short life of man. Of what went before it, or of what is to follow, we know not. If, therefore, this new doctrine bring us something more certain, in my mind it is worthy of adoption."

The end of the argument was that Coifi himself hurled a lance at the idol he had worshipped. Godmundham, near Market Weighton, was the scene of this event, and Edwin and his people were baptised at York. The men of Deivyrr and Bryneich (Deira and Bernicia) were now being baptised in crowds, and the battle-ground of Cattraeth, Catterick, was one of the bishop's customary places for the baptism of his converts in the Swale. But in the year 633 the Cymry of Strathclyde, under Cadwal and Penda, attacked the Saxons, and in a great battle at Haethfelth, or Hatfield Chase, they killed the king Edwin, whose kingdom extended so far into the north, that some derive from him the name of Edinburgh, which is believed to appear for the first time in any extant record under the date 637. Paulinus had attributed the king's worldly successes to acceptance of the gospel; the defeat, therefore, of Edwin was received by his easily converted people as clear evidence against Christianity. Queen Ethelburga, with Paulinus and the missionaries, fled from among them, leaving only near Catterick a tuneful deacon, James, still diligent in singing, preaching, and baptising.

In the year following the flight of Paulinus, the Christian  
The Culdees. Oswald became king of the Northumbrian Angles, and  
Aidan. sent for missionaries to the Culdees of Iona. Corman  
was sent, who returned to Iona with a hopeless account of the  
rugged men of Bryneich; but Aidan took his place, and settling  
in Lindisfarne, to which his labours and those of the priests who  
followed him gave its new name of Holy Isle, he distributed his  
substance to the poor, fasted two days a week, and, travelling  
on foot among the people of his diocese, won their hearts by his  
simple truth and self-denying earnestness. More Culdees came  
through Lindisfarne into Northumbria; and for the next thirty  
years the Celts were, in this great region, spiritual teachers of  
the Saxon—teaching, preaching, and monastery building.

It was out of the midst of this great North of England move-  
Cædmon. ment, in the newly-established monastery of Whitby,  
that the Saxon heart sang through the verse of Cædmon  
its first great hymn, based on the Word of Truth.

## CHAPTER VII.

“FOR us it is very right that we praise with our words, love in minds, the Keeper of the Heavens, Glory-King of Hosts. He is the source of power, the head of all His great creation, Lord Almighty. He never had beginning, nor was made, nor cometh any end to the Eternal Lord; but His power is everlasting over heavenly thrones. With high majesty, faithful and strong, He ruled the depths of the firmament that were set wide and far for the children of glory, the guardians of souls.” Such is the earliest note of English song, if *Beowulf* and the other ancient poems of its class were brought hither by the Anglo-Saxons from their former home; for this is the opening of *Cadmon’s* sacred poem; and in the latent spirit of this will be found the soul of nearly all that is Saxon in our literature.

Of the history of *Cadmon* and his work we know nothing except from *Bede*, who in two successive chapters<sup>1</sup> tells first of the life and death of the Abbess *Hilda* of *Whitby*. *Whitby*, and then of *Cadmon*, whose great sacred poem was produced at *Whitby* in her time. Of the *Whitby* monastery itself, this was the origin. *Penda*, the fierce heathen king of the *Mercians*, having been defeated and slain at *Winwidfield*, near *Leeds* (A.D. 655) by King *Oswy*, the brother and successor of King *Oswald*, *Oswy* gave his daughter *Ellfeda*, then but a year old, to be consecrated to God’s service as a nun. He gave also twelve pieces of land, six among the men of *Deivyrr*, and six among the men of *Bryneich*, as the sites of monasteries. His consecrated child was placed in the monastery called *Herutea* (*Hartlepool*)—for still the tale of our early literature haunts the neighbourhood of the presumed English *Heorot*—where the Abbess *Hilda* then presided. The measure

<sup>1</sup> ‘Hist. Eccl.’ Lib. iv. cap. 23, 24.

of land for one of these monasteries was the same as that for a township, namely, a possession of ten families. Two years afterwards, having acquired a site some thirty miles to the south, on the other side of the Tees, at Streoneshalh (so called from a beacon that stood on the cliff), now Whitby, Hilda built there a monastery, to which she and her company removed; and here Elfreda was first a learner, afterwards, as Hilda's successor in the post of abbess, a teacher, until her own death at the age of sixty. This dedicated princess, therefore, was in the monastery when Cædmon there composed his Paraphrase. In the same monastery, King Oswy, his queen Eanfleda, and Eanfleda's father Edwin, besides many other noble persons, were all buried in the chapel dedicated to St. Peter. This monastery—dedicated, indeed, to St. Peter, but long called St. Hilda's—set near the brow of the high sea-cliff at Streoneshalh,<sup>1</sup> where Esk, in the deep valley below, threads through a wooded vale its way into the bright broad sea, was the acknowledged centre of religious energy for the region corresponding to our modern counties of Durham, Northumberland, and Yorkshire. It was here that in Hilda's time the synod was held (A.D. 664) for settlement of dispute between the teachers of the Celtic or Culdee and those of the Roman Church as to the time for celebrating Easter, at which synod the Roman custom was adopted against the counsel of Iona-taught Cōlman, bishop of Lindisfarne, and Abbess Hilda.

Hilda was the daughter of Hereric, a nephew of King Edwin. She was one of those who had been converted by the preaching of Paulinus, and did not revert to heathendom. When the Roman missionaries fled, she joined her sister at the monastery of Chelles, twelve miles from Paris. Recalled by Bishop Aidan, she received for the monastic use of herself and very few companions the land of one family on the north side of the river Wear. After spending a year there, she became abbess of Herut-ea, founded not long before by Heia, the first Northumbrian nun, who was then changing her abode. At Herut-ea,

<sup>1</sup> The present abbey ruins are those of additions to a later structure built upon the site of the old Saxon monastery. The original building was destroyed by the Danes in 867, and refounded twice after the Conquest.

Hilda—who was much trusted, visited, and counselled by Aidan and other chief teachers among the Celtic Christians—governed for some years. She then built the religious house of Streoneshalh, where they who lived with her shared the goods of this world in common, where all who knew her called her Mother, and whither kings went to get counsel from her wisdom. Whoever studied under her direction was obliged to attend so much to the reading of the Scriptures that many worthy servants of the Church and five bishops are recorded to have come out of her monastery. Afflicted by sickness for the last six years of her life, Hilda never failed in any of her duties; and her last words to her community—in which men and women were not yet parted into the separate houses of the monks and nuns—were of admonition that they should preserve the peace of the Gospel among themselves and with all others. The memory of the Lady Hilda has remained sweet for more than a thousand years among the traditions of the poor about the place that was her home. Towards the close of the last century, a historian<sup>1</sup> of Whitby told that in his day when, at ten or eleven o'clock, on a summer forenoon, the sunbeams fall, among the present abbey ruins, in the inside of the northern part of the choir, 'tis then that the spectators who stand on the west side of Whitby churchyard so as just to see the most northerly part of the abbey, past the north of Whitby Church, imagine they perceive in one of the highest windows there the resemblance of a woman arrayed in a shroud. Though," says the local historian, "we are certain this is only a reflection, caused by the splendour of the sun's beams, yet report says, and it is constantly believed among the vulgar, to be an appearance of Lady Hilda in her shroud, or rather in her glorified state." And so she who among an untaught people diffused with the light of the Gospel the warmth of its charity, still when the flowers bloom by the hard wayside, and the bird sings on the thorn, appears to the half-taught a vision of sunshine in the old place of her toil.

<sup>1</sup> The 'History of Whitby and of Whitby Abbey,' by Lionel Charlton. York, 1779. The tradition is also the subject of some doggerel lines given in Grose's 'Antiquities.'

Hilda founded the Whitby monastery in the year 657, and died there in the year 680; then reigned in her stead the Princess Elfleda, trained under her care.

It was at Whitby Monastery, in Hilda's time, that apparently the earliest attempt was made to diffuse orally in popular verse, that could be easily remembered and passed from neighbour to neighbour, from parent to child, that knowledge of Scripture which the good abbess required all students under her charge to attain by study of the written Word. Before there were books, and almost before there were manuscripts in England, it was only through the ear that the half-pagan masses could be taught. At a later period, we shall find early religious teachers of the Normans enforcing Scripture history upon the minds of their rude congregations by visibly acting its chief incidents within their churches, interspersing them with broad effects for popular enjoyment; and so, while seeking to read impressively the lessons of the day, the Church established the foundations of the Stage. We shall find, also, the Anglo-Saxons, after the Conquest, entering with zest into this way of instruction; but in Hilda's time, and long after it, attainment of the same object was sought more directly. Far from the simple Anglo-Saxon mind, and very far from the woman's mind of Hilda, was any blending of buffoonery with the essentials of Scripture. And throughout, in greater and in smaller writings, we shall presently find that it was mainly upon the living essentials, a true sublimity in the conception of God's infinite mercy and power, joined to a reverent and perfect faith in Him—upon all in fact, that was practical in religious teaching—that the religious literature of the Anglo-Saxons fastened. Diffusion of the Sacred History was sought, therefore, in Hilda's time at Whitby, not by the miracle-play—a form of literature then unconceived in England—but by a deeply-earnest Paraphrase into the native form of verse that had been long associated with heroic legends orally preserved and with all metrical traditions of the people. The peculiar constitution of verse, whatever its form, tends, by rhythm and the repetition of certain letters and sounds, both to assure verbal accuracy in tradition and to aid the memory. The short lines and the close alliterative system of the Anglo-Saxon metre supplied much

technical aid to the memory ; for, a couplet having been once properly begun, the initial letter of the second and third chief word in it was usually told by the first as a guide to their right recollection. Into this verse of oral traditions, then—the verse, also, to which all tunes and instruments of Anglo-Saxon song were adapted—it was one of the cares of Abbess Hilda to scatter knowledge of the Scriptures broadcast among the men of Deivyr, Bryneich, and all the surrounding regions.

A poet was among the Christian converts, who became “a brother in her monastery specially distinguished by divine grace ; for he used to make songs apt to religion and piety ; so that whatever he learnt through interpreters of Holy Writ, this he, after a little while, in poetical words, composed with the utmost sweetness and feeling, would produce in his own tongue, namely, that of the Angles. By whose songs often the minds of many were made to glow with contempt of earthly and desire for heavenly things.” So writes Bede ; by whom we are told that this man, who was named Cædmon, did not enter the monastery until of mature age. The tale of his reception, read as it stands, is perhaps only a misreading of the natural into the supernatural. A marvel may, indeed, have been feigned to give the Scripture paraphrase weight with the people. Pious frauds were accordant with the civilization of a time which thought it no sin to mislead heathen opinion in small or even great things, when it appeared that so, with hurt to none, men sitting in darkness might be brought more readily into the way of everlasting truth. There are few in any Church whom any plea would now so blind that they could think of stepping Godward on a lie. But of good Christians who sacrificed themselves to their work in the far past, let us not forget that when they did feign miracles (and here possibly there was a miracle believed rather than feigned), they who feigned were also of the world in which they laboured, eager to stir with a new life rude masses of people steeped in superstition ; for whom marvels were invented by their heathen teachers, and who, knowing as yet nothing of the ways of God in nature, saw the supernatural, in every sight, sound, or incident that raised their wonder. The Abbess Hilda, in the seventh century, found a homely native poet of rare genius among her converts. He was a poet,



with vague yearnings that made songs of "the gift-stool" and "the war-beast," poor in his esteem, seeking he knew not what voice, pained with a sense of the sealed fountain within him, until the teaching of the Christian missionaries stirred his soul, and at last, with strange emotion, his sense of God rose as sublime music to his lips. "He was of secular habit," Bede tells us, "until of mature age, and had never learnt any poem. Sometimes, therefore, at a feast, when, for the sake of pleasure, all should sing in their turn, he, when he saw the harp coming near him, rose from table, and went home. Once, when he did that, and, having left the house of festivity, went out to the stables of the beasts,<sup>1</sup> whose custody was on that night entrusted to him" (a statement from which has arisen, partly through King Alfred's translation of the passage, the common habit of assuming that he was a cow-herd), "and there, when at the usual hour he yielded to sleep, one stood by him, saluting him, and calling him by name. 'Cædmon,' he said, 'sing me something!' 'I cannot sing,' he said; 'for I have come out hither from this feast because I could not sing.' Again he who spoke with him said, 'But you have to sing to me.' 'What,' he said, 'ought I to sing?' But he answered, 'Sing the origin of creatures.' Having received which answer he began immediately to sing, in praise of God the Creator, verses of which this is the sense. 'Now we ought to praise the Author of the Heavenly Kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of Glory. How He, though the Eternal God, became the author of all marvels; Omnipotent Guardian, who created for the sons of men, first heaven for their roof, and then the earth.' This is the sense, but not the order, of the words which he sang when sleeping." It is further told that Cædmon remembered on waking the few lines he had made in his sleep, and proceeded to make others like them. Now, all this may be true, without a miracle. In his lay habit, Cædmon had listened to the preaching and had revered the self-denying practice of the Culdee missionaries. The songs he never learnt by rote he left unlearnt, hardly conscious that this was because

<sup>1</sup> "Ad stabula jumentorum, quorum ei custodia nocte illa erat delegata." Jumenta are any animals that are yoked, draught animals or beasts of burden.

they did not satisfy him. He evaded his turn with the harp at feasts. On this occasion he went out from among his comrades—some of whom had ridden or come in vehicles to the place of festival—because he it was among the guests whose turn it was that night, in the half-civilized community not unused to cattle-plunder, to keep night-watch over the beasts of the whole company. The rude feast and song might have impressed the imagination of a poet warmed and influenced by the report of zealous preachers. So, dreaming on his watch, he might have been prepared for the embodiment in vision of his waking thought; his thought having been that the song demanded from the Christian in those rough days must celebrate to men the glory of the King of Hosts, the Lord Almighty. "What," he asked still, when dreaming, "ought I to sing?" and the vision answered, "Sing the origin of creatures." In that night, dreaming and waking, he began to weave the solemn song, and his soul, stirred by his theme, seemed to him stirred by sudden inspiration.

Cædmon went in the morning, Bede tells, to the steward of town-lands who was set over him, and pointed out the gift he had discovered; being then taken to the abbess, she ordered him in the presence of more learned men to tell his dream and repeat his poem. All judged his gift to be from God. They set before him some piece of sacred history or doctrine, asking him to put it, if he were able, into verse. He went home and returned next day with the piece versified. The abbess then advised him to put off his secular habit and become a monk, and having received him, with all his goods, into the monastery, caused him to be taught the series of sacred history. All that Cædmon received thus into his ear "by remembering and, like a clean animal, by ruminating, he turned into sweetest verse, and by rendering it back to them, more smoothly, made his teachers to be in turn his hearers. But he sang," Bede adds, in summary of his work, "of earth's creation and the origin of the human race and all the history of Genesis, of the Exodus of Israel from Egypt and entrance into the promised land; of many other histories of Holy Writ, of the Lord's Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension into Heaven, of the coming of the Holy Ghost, and of the teaching of the apostles. Also

he made many poems of the terror of judgment to come, and of the fear of hell, and of the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom; many others also of divine blessing and judgments, in all which his care was to draw men from the love of wicked deeds and excite them to the love and desire of well doing." We are farther told that our first Christian poet was pious, humble, zealous against wrong; that at last after fourteen days of mortal illness he caused himself to be carried to a part of the monastery appointed for the infirm and dying, and that there, receiving the last sacrament, and being as he said to the brethren about him "very kindly disposed to you and all God's men," he died in a calm sleep.

We have no record of Cædmon's life and work but this which we receive from Bede, who was a north countryman, writing not more than sixty years after the death of Cædmon. In support of Bede's account we have also the single MS. of a large fragment of religious poetry, corresponding well with what is said of Cædmon's work, and apparently too good to have proceeded from some other unnamed and unconsidered writer. The opening of this fragment corresponds also sufficiently, as the reader may have already observed, since the two openings have incidentally been quoted, with Bede's professedly inexact Latin prose version of its purport. But when King Alfred translated Bede, he seems to have retranslated Bede's Latin prose into Anglo-Saxon verses of his own, which, like Bede's version, display only a general correspondence in their sense and spirit with the opening of that poem which we now receive as Cædmon's Paraphrase. For this reason it is, of course, in the power of any one to say, and some, therefore, do say, that King Alfred quoted literally from another poem, which was that of the real Cædmon, and that a pseudo-Cædmon wrote that which remains to us. Ground can be found also on which to raise an opinion that, although the poem—a poem, and a noble one—exists, and cannot itself be explained out of existence, yet at least there never was a man named Cædmon by whom it could have been written. If so, we should lose little, having the poem. Somebody wrote it, and for want of other name Cædmon will serve to represent him. The story of the manner of the writing is pronounced commonly and readily to be a myth. A Scandi-

Cædmon is without significance in Anglo-Saxon. These writers point out that the name is variously written by King Alfred, Cædmon, Ceadmon, Cedmon, and that ced meant a boat, whence Dr. Bouterwek translates the word into pirate,<sup>1</sup> and Professor Sandras into boatman.

The Norman monks paid so little respect to Anglo-Saxon MSS., which they habitually cleaned off with their pumice that they might recover the parchment to their own use,<sup>2</sup> and in later time so much havoc was made among monastic libraries, that of the extant portion of Cædmon's Paraphrase, as of every important remain of Anglo-Saxon poetry, and of almost every shorter poem, one copy alone has been discovered. The copy of Cædmon (Cod. Jun. XI. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford) is a small folio of 229 pages. The first 212 pages containing the poetry founded upon Genesis, Exodus, and Daniel, are written in a clear hand of the tenth century and adorned as far as page 96 with many illustrative pictures,<sup>3</sup> spaces being left for continuing the same system of illustration as far as page 213. But after that page another less careful and apparently less ancient handwriting appears. In this hand, no space being left for illustration, there is added the poem of Christ and Satan, usually regarded as the second book of Cædmon, which except an interpolation, is, I think of Cædmon's writing, but which some now regard as the work of another poet.

It was Archbishop Usher who, in the course of his hunt after books, obtained from dealers in remaining wreck of the old monasteries this important volume. When a young man of

Disquisitio. Has Theses Parisiensi Litterarum Facultati proponbat S. G. Sandras in Lyceo Claromontensi Professor.' Paris, 1859.

<sup>1</sup> "Vox ipsa composita e mon, vir (cf. Paraphr. p. 89, flot-mon, nauta; p. 186, 12, vræc-mon, fugitivus) et ced, quod, ut in Glossis a Cl. Monio editis est (p. 331) lintrem denotat. Cedmon tamen non nautam significare videtur, sed potius idem valere quod scegdh-mon, pirata, a scegdh, sceigdh, liburna, scapha." Bouterwek, *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> In Wanley's Introd. to his Catalogue of Saxon MSS. there is citation from an Index of MSS. belonging to the year 1248 of such entries as "Item duo Anglica, vetusta et inutilia. Item sermones anglici, vetusti, inutilis. Passionale sanctorum anglie scriptum, vetust., inutile."

<sup>3</sup> Copies of them were engraved for the Antiquarian Society, and published in the 24th volume of the 'Archæologia' (for 1832).

three and twenty, he was sent over to England to buy books for Trinity College, Dublin, and then worked in concert with Sir Thomas Bodley, who was employed in the same way on behalf of his new library at Oxford. He came to England again, three years later, to collect books and MSS. relating to English history, when that diligent book-collector, Sir Robert Cotton, was one of his friends, and Usher, having thus begun, remained a book-collector to the last. The MS. of this Paraphrase, obtained in the course of his researches, Usher gave to Francis Dujon, the younger, known in literature as Junius, the learned son of a learned Leyden divinity professor. For Dujon, the younger, who had come to England in 1620 as librarian to the Earl of Arundel, and lived for thirty years with the earl holding that office, was known to Usher, as to every scholar in England, for an amiable and sociable man, who thrived bodily on work, studying and writing fourteen hours a day, and lived, always a student, careful to take regular daily exercise and enough sleep and food, to be a hale old man of eighty-eight. The favourite subject of Dujon's research was Anglo-Saxon, in which he believed he could find the etymologies of all the tongues of northern Europe. The kindly scholar left England in 1650, and returned in his old age to die among us. During his absence he caused his copy of the Anglo-Saxon Paraphrase received from Usher to be printed at Amsterdam,<sup>1</sup> in the year 1655; and having referred to Bede's account of Cædmon he did not then hesitate to name Cædmon as its author. Milton was among the contemporary English scholars who knew Junius and were interested in his studies. He had digested Bede into an English history, and knowing what was published by good

<sup>1</sup> 'Cædmonis Monachi Paraphrasis poetica Genesios ac præcipuarum Sacræ Paginæ Historiarum, adhinc annos MLXX Anglo-Saxonice conscripta, et nunc primum edita a Francisco Junio, F. F. Amstelodami, 1655.' It is a small thin 4to. Some fac-similes of the pictures in the MS. were engraved by private subscription in 1755 for insertion among its pages. Junius here names Cædmon on the title-page; but his reason for doing so he gives on page 248 of another book published by him at Amsterdam in the same year, 'Observationes in Willeramii Abbatis Francicam Paraphrasin Cantici Canticorum.' Willeramius was a Franconian abbot of the 11th century, who left philologists a treasure by paraphrasing Solomon's Song into Latin hexameter and prose of the ancient language of the Franks.

scholars at home and abroad, must needs have been interested in the discovery of a work that removed Bede's story of Cædmon out of the region of fable, or, at least, produced an ancient native poem on the very subject to which Milton was himself most strongly attracted. In the years next following the printing of Cædmon's Paraphrase at Amsterdam Milton's mind was occupied with his great poem. The first edition of Cædmon was published in 1655. 'Paradise Lost' was first published in 1677. It is almost impossible that a scholar like Milton should have taken no interest in a new book of special interest for all, bearing upon a subject more peculiarly interesting to himself, and coming from a scholar so familiarly known to English men of letters as Francis Dujon. From whatever friend was able to inform him, it is reasonable to think that the blind Milton with his eager intellect must have inquired and learnt in what manner the Anglo-Saxon poet sang the Fall of Man; and what was described or translated to him—it might even have been by Somner who had worked through Cædmon during preparation of his Anglo-Saxon Dictionary, which appeared in 1659—there is, as we shall find, some reason in 'Paradise Lost' itself for believing that he heard with admiration.

Dr. George Hickes, at the end of the century, looking at the work only with antiquarian eyes, was the first to question the identification of the Anglo-Saxon poem with Bede's poet.<sup>1</sup> He relied for calling it the work of an imitator of Cædmon on three points, namely, the want of verbal correspondence between the lines in Alfred's version of Bede and the opening lines of the Paraphrase; his own impression that the dialect of the Paraphrase is that of extant verses on a victory of Athelstane in 938, and on the death of Edward in 975; and his impression that the Paraphrase was full of Danish idioms, indicating the language of a Northumbrian who wrote after the long occupation of that province by the Danes. I believe that no Anglo-Saxon scholar of the present day has found in Cædmon Hickes's Anglo-Danish; and if Dr. Hickes could err as he did on the larger point of verbal criticism, his opinion is worth nothing at all on the minute; especially when, as Mr. Thorpe rightly

observes, due allowance has to be made for the interpolations, omissions, and corruptions of transcribers.

I reject, then, as pure error Hicke's second and third reasons for parting the Cædmon of Bede from the poem which Junius rightly pronounced to be his Scripture Paraphrase. How little importance is to be attached to Hicke's other reason has appeared sufficiently from the preceding narrative. We know nothing of any "pseudo-Cædmon." Other monasteries than Whitby may have produced with righteous intent such metrical paraphrases for free currency of Scripture-knowledge among the Anglo-Saxon people; as different monasteries had afterwards each its own body of Scripture history made into miracle-plays. The writers of these other paraphrases were not pseudo-Cædmons; they were fellow-labourers in a great Christian work. But Cædmon—whose story, as Bede tells it, I believe to be substantially true, although the name he bears may have been given to him by the scholars of the monastery—Cædmon was the great religious poet of the Anglo-Saxons. The fame of his Paraphrase spread into France, and if we may not trust our perception of good poetry when it is set before us, we may be tolerably sure, from the mechanical appearance of the extant copy, that all the pains spent upon the numerous and elaborate pictures with which the writing of the earlier copyist is through many pages adorned, would not have been bestowed on any but the work of its kind that was, at the time of copying, in chief esteem. But the true evidence lies in the work itself; and I proceed, therefore, to tell in brief what are the contents of the manuscript of

#### *Cædmon's Paraphrase.*

Cædmon begins as Milton begins with the fall of the rebellious angels; then, leaving the pains of hell, and having told how there was peace in heaven, he passes to the design of God to create a better race and a fair earth where "the wide abyss stood deep and dim." He sings the creation of light; the parting of the waters from the firmament, and of the dry land from the sea. Three leaves cut out of the MS. contained the song of the other days of creation, we read next, therefore, of the creation of Eve; of God's blessing upon the new-found pair in Paradise, and, after a gap caused by the loss of another leaf, of the command to abstain from the forbidden fruit. Then we return to the fallen host of one of the ten angel-tribes, and contrast with his present state the previous glory of

him whom Cædmon calls "The Angel of Presumption." The first words ascribed to him are, in spirit, altogether like the first speech wherein we find Milton's Satan

"in bold words  
Breaking the horrid silence."

"Why shall I toil? said he. I need not a superior. I can with my own hands work as many wonders. I have great power to form a diviner throne, higher in heaven. Why shall I serve for his favour, bend to him in such vassalage? I may be a god, as he. Stand by me, strong associates, who will not fail me in the strife. Heroes, stern of mood, have chosen me for chief, with such may counsel be devised, by such we may make captures. They are my zealous, faithful friends; I may be their chieftain, and sway in this realm. It seems not right to me that I should cringe to God for any good; I will no longer be his vassal."

Again, after a description of the place to which Satan and his host were condemned, we are told that Satan harangued:—

"He was erst God's angel, fair in Heaven, until his mind urged, and pride most of all, that he would not revere the word of the Lord of Hosts. His thought boiled within his heart, his punishment was hot without him, and he said: 'This narrow place is most unlike that other we knew, high in Heaven's kingdom, which my master bestowed on me, though we must cede it now to the All-Powerful. Yet hath he not done rightly to strike us down to the abyss, bereave us of Heaven's kingdom, and decree to people it with men. That is to me the chief of sorrows, that Adam, who was wrought of earth, should possess my strong seat—that it should be delight to him while we endure our torment in this hell. Oh! had I power of my hands, and might for one season be without, one winter's space, then with this host I——. But around me lie the iron bonds, and this chain pinches me.'"

Then Satan dilates on the scene of his torment, and continues:—

"He hath now devised a world where He hath made man after His own image, with whom He will repopulate the kingdom of heaven, therefore must we strive earnestly that if we may we shall avenge our wrongs on Adam and his offspring."<sup>1</sup>

And at the end of his speech he calls his followers to consultation:—

"Begin we now to consult about the feud. If of old to any follower I gave princely treasures while we sat happy in that good realm, and in our seats had sway, then could he never repay me with more precious service than if as my supporter he could pass up from hence through these barriers, and might fly winged through the cloud to where Adam and Eve stand wrought on earth while we are cast into this deep abyss."

It was not in Cædmon's Paraphrase, as in 'Paradise Lost,' Satan himself who flew to earth and tempted Eve; but here again there is a gap in the manuscript, and we lose the account of the acceptance of the mission by

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<sup>1</sup> Compare 'Paradise Lost,' Bk. II. from line 345.



one of the chiefs in hell, whom we next find departing as he, "lion-like in air, in hostile mood, dashed the fire aside with a fiend's power"—a thought kindred to one in Milton's grander description of the first rising of Satan when

"On each hand the flames  
Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled  
In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale."

So Cædmon felt and expressed simply in a couplet the horror of a 'hell "Without light, and full of flame," while Milton felt and expressed the same thought fully in the lines

"Yet from those flames  
No light, but rather darkness visible  
Served only to discover sights of woe."

Such parallels imply no imitation. These are thoughts that belong naturally to the vivid image formed in a true poet's mind. It is enough to learn from them that Cædmon, too, saw what he sang, and formed within his mind grand pictures though he represents them only with a few direct and simple words. Cædmon also doubtless obtained thoughts as well as incidents from the Rabbinical tradition current in a church under strong influences from the East. Milton, too, was acquainted with them.<sup>1</sup>

The "devil's dark messenger" journeys to earth "through his fiend's might," and finds there Adam and Eve in the garden by the two trees unlike in their fruit. In disguise as a serpent, the fiend first represents himself to Adam as a messenger from God, who now bids him learn science by eating of the tree of knowledge. Adam replies that he was forbidden to do so, and that the messenger brings no token from his Lord. The serpent then turns wrath to the woman, and urging upon her the anger of God that will follow Adam's rejection of His messenger, counsels her to ward off punishment from her husband. Let her try the fruit, and prove what light comes of obedience to the message; then she can reassure Adam and "I will conceal from your Lord that Adam spake to me, such harmful words." The fiend thus beguiles the woman with his lies; "to her the Creator had assigned a weaker mind." Eve eats of the fruit and is immediately cheated with so fair a vision and a sense of light, that she urges her experience as a heavenly token upon Adam and exhorts him to eat lest he offend. "Who," she asks, "could give me such knowledge, if God, Heaven's ruler, were not sending it? I can hear from afar, and see so widely through all the world over the broad creation: I can hear in heaven the joy of the firmament. It became light to me in my mind, within and without, after I tasted of the fruit. I now have it here in my hand, my good lord, and will gladly give it thee."

<sup>1</sup> More than one parallel passage, for example, shows that among the books Milton had caused to be read to him was the Latin version of 'The Chapters of Rabbi Eliezer,' published by Vorstius in 1654.

Eve urged all day, in the belief that she was urging God's command, the serpent helping, "yet did she it through faithful mind, knew not that hence so many ills must follow to mankind." At last "he from the woman took hell and death, though it was not so called, but it must have the name of fruit."

The poet describes next at some length the exultation of the fiend and his return to "the broad flames, the roofs of hell where lay his master bound in fetters." There follows sorrow of Adam and Eve in the garden, their consciousness of nakedness and dread of God; the new sense that enables them to "see the swart hell, greedy and ravenous; now mayest thou from hence hear it raging."

The story of the expulsion from Paradise is next told according to the narrative of Genesis; and then is told the Scripture story of Cain and Abel, followed as in Genesis (ch. v.) by a genealogy of which Cædmon makes poetry by interspersing memorable incidents, and recording Enoch as the first builder of cities, Jubal the first who awoke the music of the harp, Tubal Cain the first smith, and Enos "first of all children of men who called on God, after Adam slept on the green grass with spirit dignified." Then, closely following the narrative in Genesis, we have the Scripture story of the Flood. Here the poet appears in the vivid image he conveys by simple words of the rush of waters and the riding of the ark "at large under the skies over the orb of ocean." With a fine touch of his own poetry, in exact harmony with the feeling of a people for whom the raven was the carrion bird that fed upon the slain in battle, Cædmon accounts for the raven's not returning to the ark. "For the exulting fowl perched on the floating corpses." The verse tells of the covenant of the rainbow and gives from tradition the names of the women in the ark, Percoba, Olla, Olliva, and Ollivani. The narrative of Genesis is still followed, and again the instinct of the true poet appears in the manner of converting into song the genealogies of the tenth chapter. Next follows the story of the building of the tower of Babel and of the confusion of tongues, from which we are taken, still in the order of the sacred text, to the history of Abraham and Lot. The best charm of Cædmon's poetry, free as it is from extraneous ornament of metaphor or simile, is that he conceives worthily the Scripture narrative, realises to himself every action, and tells not merely what he has heard, but what, having heard, he has also seen. When Abram, going down into Egypt, counsels Sarah, the poet writes, "Abram spake—he saw the Egyptian's white-horned roofs and high burgh brightly glitter." When the narrative comes to the battle in which Lot was taken prisoner, in Cædmon's song the battle rages, as it raged in gleemens' songs for pleasure of the people; and after the battle a few words present a distinct image of the messenger of evil news, "then a warrior hastily went journeying, one, a leaving of the weapons, who had been saved in battle, to seek Abram." And after the rescue of Lot which is again pictured clearly, the returning women saw wide around "the birds tearing amid the slaughter of swords." The whole episode, including dialogue between Abram and the King of Sodom when Abram refuses to take for himself spoils of his victory, is so elaborated that the Christian poet might find

favour for his Scripture-song among the roughest warriors within the mead-hall.

From the battle-songs we pass to the story of Sarah, and of Hagar and Ishmael, and Sarah's "joyless laughter," when it was promised that she should become a mother. The tale of Sodom and Gomorrah ends with a clearly defined picture of Lot's wife turned into a salt stone. The sacred text is then followed by Cædmon through every incident until we come to the trial of Abraham's faith in the sacrifice of Isaac on the Mount. With this grand lesson of faith in God, Cædmon's Paraphrase of Genesis, so far as it is extant, ends; and here it is very possible that Cædmon himself may have ended it. He omits no circumstance, describes as from life the preparation for the sacrifice according to his own people's manner of building up a pile for burning some dead chief upon the high down by the sea; and he places Abraham's mount by the sea, so that from a spectacle not unfamiliar to themselves the sacred poet leads his hearers to a real sense of the scene, when Abraham "began to load the pile, awaken fire and fettered the hands and feet of his child, then hove on the pile young Isaac, and then hastily gripped the sword by the hilt, would kill his son with his own hands, quench the fire with the youth's gore."

From this scene of God's blessing on the perfect faith of Abraham, we pass to the paraphrase from Exodus of the story of the power of Him who was able to lead his chosen people even through the depths of the great waters. What is called the paraphrase of Exodus is in fact a single poem on the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea and the Destruction of the Host of Pharaoh. It opens in triumphant strain, and tells briefly by way of introduction what had been the previous history of Israel in Egypt. Besides the pillar of fire by night and the cloud by day, there is a holy sail sheltering the favoured people from the fierceness of the sun. So Cædmon brings the shining host to its camp on the sea-shore. Then he sees the host of Pharaoh in pursuit, glittering over theholt. The followers of Moses were despondent. "They prepared their arms, advanced the war, bucklers glittered, trumpets sang, standards rattled, they trod the nation's frontier. Around them screamed the fowls of war, greedy of battle, dewy-feathered, the wolves sung their horrid evensong." Thus vividly the story is presented through the ears to all the senses of its hearers; and when the great miracle has been worked, the troops of the Israelites march, with the Lion of Judah in the van, in solemn pomp over the "many-coloured fields," the "rugged army roads" of the sea-bottom. But here into the full heat of the story, misled by apparent connexion of some closing and opening lines, the copyist interpolates a cold, weak poem by another hand which begins with the flood and ends with the sacrifice of Isaac. We come as out of close into fresh air, when we have passed through this blunder of the transcriber which stands in place of the first entry of Pharaoh's host between the sea-walls, and from "the land of Canaan, thy people, father of noble children, of folk most excellent" pass suddenly to Cædmon's "The folk was affrighted, the flood-dread seized on their sad souls; ocean wailed with death, the mountain-heights were with blood besteamed, the sea foamed gore, crying was in the waves, the water full of weapons, a death-mist

rose." The rest is all perfect in its simplicity of vigour. The picture of the scene when "bursting ocean whooped in bloody storm" and "corpses rolled," leads to a suggestion rudely sublime of "the Guardian of the Flood," who "struck the unsheltering wave with an ancient faulchion" so that in the swoon of death those armies slept.

From the power of God leading his children safely through the mighty waters, the poet turns, in the next subject of the extant paraphrase, to the same power leading Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael with their garments unsinged through the furnace-fire. It is for the sake of this incident that we have now the paraphrase from the Scripture story of Daniel, and here we have twice repeated in different form the most elaborate simile, one of the very few similes of any kind, in Anglo-Saxon poetry: "In the hot oven all the pious three. With them was there also one in sight, an angel of the Almighty. Naught therein harmed them; but it was all most like as when in summer the sun shineth and in day dewdrops are scattered by the wind."

The Paraphrase from the story of Daniel closes with Belshazzar's feast. And this is the end of the Old Testament paraphrase as written by a careful hand in the first part of the Cædmon MS. The rest, written in later hand, has for its subject Christ and Satan. It represents Satan in Hell dreading the power of the Mediator, the descent of Christ and that rescue of souls described in the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus which was in old time a favourite subject of sacred story under the name of the Harrowing of Hell. There are not only gaps in this part of the manuscript, but there are manifest confusions and misplacements in the copying. Verses of several religious poets seem, indeed, here to have been pieced together. The Harrowing of Hell ends with a fragment having no connexion with it, although joined to it without break, from a paraphrase of gospel history describing our Lord's fasting and temptation in the wilderness. This I think is by Cædmon. It may be worth while to notice that a legendary addition is made to the command of Christ to Satan "Depart from me," in Satan's condemnation, as a punishment for his temptation of the Lord, to measure with his hands his place of torment. He finds it to be a hundred thousand miles from the door to the bottom of "hell's drear abyss."

To what has been already said of the bibliography of Cædmon's paraphrase, only a few notes need be added.

The original MS. of Cædmon lent him by Usher was used by Somner in the preparation of his dictionary before it was given to Junius. The edition of Junius was used by Lye in the formation of his dictionary, and by Manning (1772) in his supplement to it. In 1827, Conybeare's 'Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry' contained a few specimens of the Junian Cædmon, with Latin translation, and a passage in English blank verse. In 1832 the Society of Antiquaries produced Mr. Benjamin Thorpe's edition of Cædmon's 'Metrical Paraphrase of Parts of Holy Scripture in Anglo-Saxon, with an English Translation, Notes, and a Verbal Index.' Mr. Thorpe's translation has been here sometimes exactly followed in English quotation from the poem.

In 1845. Professor K. W. Bouterwek made Cædmon the subject of a course

at Elberfeld; and in 1849 he published a new edition of the text, to which he added, in 1851, a Glossary, and in 1854 a historical introduction, with a prose translation.

There is criticism of the text by Professor Dietrich, of Marburg, in the 10th vol. of Haupt's 'Zeitschrift.'

The text critically restudied is given complete in Grein's 'Bibliothek der Angelsächs: Poesie,' (Goettingen); 1857, and a translation of it with alliterative verse was included by Dr. Grein in the first volume of his 'Dichtungen der Angelsachsen,' which appeared in the same year.

'The Fall of Man or Paradise Lost of Cædmon, translated in verse from the Anglo-Saxon, with a new metrical arrangement of the lines of part of the Original Text, and an Introduction in the versification of Cædmon, by William H. F. Bosanquet' (London, 1860), prefaces with an original theory, a translation into English heroics of the Paradise Lost part of Cædmon's Paraphrase:—

"Most meet it is the Almighty Being above,  
The Lord of Hosts, our hearts adore and love," &c.

Mr. Bosanquet's theory is, that Cædmon's metre was "the Heroic measure of five feet, making ten or eleven syllables, the tenth, however, being in all cases the last accented syllable, the same as Chaucer's and Shakespeare's, with the additional ornament of a judicious and moderate alliteration." In accordance with this theory, he "thinks he has succeeded in dividing about two hundred lines of the poem in a manner quite satisfactory." Mr. Bosanquet rejects division by alliteration, which "sometimes," he says, "makes very good lines, sometimes very bad ones;" and thinks that "the number of perfect heroic lines" in Cædmon's verse is "sufficient evidence that he was well acquainted with heroic verse, if not the inventor of it."

A more accomplished English critic, Mr. Edwin Guest, in his valuable work on English Rhythms (London, 1838), after a full analysis of Cædmon's varying rhythms, speaks with the highest admiration of "the masterly manner in which he manages his numbers. His accent always falls in the right place, and the emphatic syllable is ever supported by a strong one. His rhythm changes with the thought—now marching slowly with a stately theme, and now running off with all the joyousness of triumph, when his subject teems with gladness and exultation. There is reason to believe that to these beauties our forefathers were deeply sensitive, and that Cædmon owed to them no small portion of his popularity. In these respects he has no superior in the whole range of our literature, and perhaps but one equal." (Eng. Rhythms, vol. ii., p. 50.)

## CHAPTER VIII.

A HIGH aim, a thorough sense of what is to be said, and clear simplicity of utterance, we have found, then, to be the earliest characters of Anglo-Saxon English. They give Minor Poetry of the Anglo-Saxons. its dignity and worth to Cædmon's Paraphrase, and in greater or less degree they secure respect for all that has remained to us of Anglo-Saxon poetry and prose. The minor poetry of the Anglo-Saxons, written after the establishment of their first monasteries, is almost exclusively religious. The work in hand was the complete conversion of the people; and the monasteries became the great centres of intellectual activity. All the wit of the land, ready for exercise, the priests culstied in this service. From them there was no demand for, but there was discouragement of, the employment of intellect on other work than that which, in their opinion, tended to extension of God's kingdom. The religious poet enjoyed easy sustenance and zealous publication of his fame. For literature to cleave to the preachers was its worldly interest, and was felt also to be its sacred duty. There seems to be an end, therefore, for the present of the heroic songs in celebration of half-barbarous distributors of rings and bracelets. Not the generosity of Hygelac or Hrothgar, but the tender mercy of God is the theme of the gleemen. It may be that the extant body of minor Anglo-Saxon poetry would appear less exclusively religious, if the collections left to us were not all such as had been made by pious inmates of the monasteries. We must not omit that consideration. Victories had their minstrelsy, outside the monastery walls. For a later time, the Saxon Chronicle shows that. But, on the other hand, the insertion in the Exeter Book of the Traveller's Song and the Lament of Deor, as well as of some secular proverbs and riddles, shows that there was no formal design to make that collection what it in fact is, a religious one; and what we have, is what we might expect. The time had not

yet come for religious controversies among the people, or for popular endeavours to bring Christianity and civil government to kiss each other. Mixed, of course, with some credulous acceptance of the fables suited to their day, the early Anglo-Saxon poets show, like the early preachers, only a simple, strong desire to spread and deepen through the land a knowledge of the first truths of the Gospel. This general impression of their character will be confirmed even by a very short descriptive list of the remaining poems of the Anglo-Saxons.

A MS. in the British Museum,<sup>1</sup> first published by Dr. Hic-  
The Menolo-  
gium.
in his 'Thesaurus,' contains the Poetical Calendar  
of the Anglo-Saxons. It was reprinted from Hic-  
 kes with the addition of a translation and notes by the Rev. Samuel  
 Fox in the year 1830.<sup>2</sup> The Calendar is religious, and not  
 pastoral, briefly setting forth in verse, not unmixed with a  
 poetical suggestion of the courses of the seasons, "the times of  
 the saints that men should observe, as the command of the King  
 of the Saxons goeth through Britain at this very time;" the  
 time being, therefore, subsequent to the fusion of the Heptarchy  
 into one kingdom. I give, as an example of its manner,—

*"The Anglo-Saxon Calendar for May."*

"Then quickly comes May round as a guest dainty and fair, with trees and plants in their raiment, and brings magnificently great abundance to the many everywhere. The same day the noble companions, Philip and James, brave fellow-servants, gave their lives for love of God. And then after two nights it is that God revealed to the blessed Helen the noblest of beams on which suffered the King of Angels for love to man; the Creator on the Cross, by consent of the Father. Thence it is after the space of a week except one night, that summer brings to men gem-bright days and warm seasons. Then the fields blossom with early flowers; so that the joy of many kinds of the living ascends through mid earth, gives praise to the king, manifoldly calling on the glorious Almighty. Then it is after the number of eight days and nine, that the Lord took Augustine into the other light, happy in heart because here in Britain he had made earls obedient to him for the will of God as the wise Gregory commanded him. I have not heard that before him any other man or more illustrious bishop ever brought better lore over the briny sea. He now rests in Britain among the men of Kent in the chief city, near the celebrated Minster."

<sup>1</sup> Cotton Collection, Tiberius, B. I.

<sup>2</sup> *Menologium, seu Calendarium Poeticum, ex Hiccesano Thesauro; or, the Poetical Calendar of the Anglo-Saxons, with an English Translation and Notes,* by the Rev. Samuel Fox, M.A. London, 1830.

In the year 1823, Dr. Friedrich Blume found in a monastery at Vercelli, in the Milanese, a MS. volume of Anglo-Saxon sermons, which contained also six ancient poems. The Vercelli Book.

Blume tells us<sup>1</sup> that tradition having ascribed the writing of this volume to Eusebius, it was placed among the relics, and leaves were torn out of it, often from among the poetry, as precious gifts for favoured persons. Then, suffering injury from damp, it was removed to a dry place in the sacristy, where it was found in a most wretched condition. By the English Record Commission Dr. Blume was employed to make a copy of the poems in this volume; and they were then printed, under Mr. Thorpe's directions, in an 'Appendix B.' to Mr. Cooper's Report for 1836, of which Report a few copies were circulated, but which was never published. From a copy of this very scarce Appendix, lent to him by Dr. Lappenberg, Jacob Grimm published, in 1840, his edition, with a full introduction and notes, of the two chief poems contained in it: the Legend of St. Andrew and Cynwulf's *Elene*, or the Legend of the Finding of the Cross.<sup>2</sup> Upon Jacob Grimm's volume Mr. John Mitchell Kemble founded, in 1844, his edition for the *Ælfrie Society* of the "Poetry of the Codex Vercellensis, with an English translation: Part I., the Legend of St. Andrew." The six poems of the Vercelli MS. are, in name and order, these: the Legend of St. Andrew (in 344 lines); the Fates of the Apostles (in 190 lines); two Addresses of Souls to the Corpse (320 lines); of which the first is extant also in the *Exeter Book*, and the other is to be found only in the Vercelli MS., where its end is lost, in the same leaf that contained the beginning of the next poem, that (of 92 lines) on the Falschood of Men. The other two pieces are, a Vision of the Holy Rood (310 lines), and Saint Helen: the Legend of the Finding of the Cross (a poem in 2648 lines), which was taken by the poet from the *Acta Apocrypha S. Jude Quiriaci*, of which the Greek original is among the MSS. of the Vatican.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Iter Italicum,' vol. i. pp. 99, 100.

<sup>2</sup> 'Andreas und Elene, herausgegeben von Jacob Grimm.' Cassell, 1840.

<sup>3</sup> The original legend will be found in the *Acta Sanctorum* of the Jesuit Brothers Henschen and Pappe, in the first vol. of May, under May 3, p. 361 (Antwerp, 1680).



The Legend of St. Helen tells how the Emperor Constantine, being threatened by hosts of Huns, was comforted in a dream, and saw also a bright cross in the sky, with inscribed letters, telling him that in this sign he should conquer. After his return from victory, his Majesty inquired which of the gods it was to whom that sign belonged, and, being taught by the Christians in his empire, himself received baptism. He then sent, with a stately company, his mother Helen to the Holy Land to discover the true cross itself. Speaking at large to the assembled Jews, Helen inquired of them; and the Jews also took large counsel together. They gave up to her a wise man named Judas, who might be able to tell her what they did not themselves know. Threat of death or persuasion obtained only from Judas the profession of his ignorance upon a matter that took place so long ago. "And yet," urged Helen, "you can tell me how many men fell at the siege of Troy." Seven days' imprisonment without food obliged this wise man to contrive a confession; so, not knowing where the cross had been buried, he led the way to the top of Calvary, and prayed that a sweet smoke might rise from the ground where it lay. The smoke rose, and Judas then confessed faith in the Saviour. He dug twenty feet deep to where the three crosses were buried. They were taken to the Queen; and now Judas, who did not know, was asked which of the three crosses was that of the Saviour. He had them all set up with great solemnity, and waited for a sign. A dead man was brought by. Judas placed the corpse against two of the crosses, nothing happening; but the touch of the third restored life. Thus the true cross was found; but the Devil was angered bitterly against this second Judas, who was not his friend. And Judas, now become strong in faith, met his assault. A temple was built on Calvary; Judas, baptized under the new name of Cyriac, became a priest in Jerusalem; and then Helen became anxious to have by his help not the cross only, but also the sacred nails. They shone like suns from the ground when he sought for them. The nails were made by Helen into a bit for the horse of Constantine, who was thenceforth invincible in battle. But Helen devoted herself to religious duties.

The author of the poem on St. Helen, which is diffusely

didactic and a little dull, at the end of it speaks in tone of religious lament about himself, and introduces fancifully his name of Cynewulf in detached letters, sprinkled among his griefs, as he does also in a poem of his, contained in the Exeter Book, thus :

“**C** the grieved, plagued with sorrow, though he received the jewel and the twisted gold in the mead-hall **Y** sorrowed. The comrade **N** bore gnawing grief, binding mystery when the horse **E** before him measured the mile-path, and ran proudly to the adornment of rings. Gone is the madness **W**, joy with the years; fled is youth, and the old high spirit. Once **U** was, years since, the glitter of youth; now the days of the past are gone, and the joy of life like water **L** is parted. Treasures **F** pass away from all under heaven.”

Jacob Grimm suggests that there was a Cynewulf, Bishop of Lindisfarne, who died in the year 780: but Mr. Kemble—who sees in Beowulf and Cædmon English of the West Saxons, and cannot allow, therefore, to Saint Helen, written in the same form, a Northumbrian origin—gives to the poem a much later date, by supposing it to have been written by a Cynewulf, Abbot of Peterborough, who died in the year 1011.

The Legend of St. Andrew, in the Vercelli Book, tells how St. Matthew visited the heathen Mermedonians, a race of cannibal sorcerers, who cast him into prison with a multitude of men and women, who had also put out his eyes and given him drink which compels men to eat grass like the cattle. But Matthew, having prayed that there might be preserved to him the intellect by which he worshipped the Creator, was assured in a vision that St. Andrew would be sent to release him from his misery. St. Andrew was then, in a vision, sent to Mermedonia; and was rowed thither by three men, who were, in fact, the Almighty himself and two of his angels. On St. Andrew's arrival at the prison of Matthew, the guards fell dead, Matthew's sight was restored, and the whole company departed, praising God. The cannibals, coming next day to feast on some of their prisoners, found them gone, and were about to eat one of themselves; but St. Andrew rescued him, heathen as he was, in pity, by miraculously blunting the knives turned against him.\* A fiend then directed the savages against the saint, who was seized, imprisoned, grievously tormented and reviled of devils. At last, praying for speedy death, he learnt

that his martyrdom was accomplished, swept away the worst of his tormentors with a flood, and, having converted and baptized the rest, went back into Achaia.<sup>1</sup>

The Exeter Book<sup>2</sup> contains hymns to the Saviour, to the Virgin, to the Trinity; on the Nativity, Ascension, and Harrowing of Hell; Hymns of Praise and Thanksgiving; Poems on the Day of Judgment and the Crucifixion, and on Souls after Death; a short sermon in verse, and the Legend of St. Guthlac, a metrical paraphrase of the Latin Life of St. Guthlac by Felix, a monk of Croyland Abbey. St. Guthlac dwelt in a mountain, where he raised a cross, and was kept pure by an angel, while the fiends whom he had banned from their green hills plotted against him. The poem tells how he stood firm against their terrors and temptations, until his spirit was "led in the embrace of angels to the upper sky; before the face of the Eternal Judge they led him lovingly." To a faithful disciple, "the beloved man to the beloved," Guthlac said as he was dying,

"Be thou ready for a journey when body and limbs, and this spirit of life, sunder their fellowship through death. Go after this on a long way that thou mayst tell to my sister, the fair joy, the most beloved, my departure to an eternal dwelling; and also tell her, in my words, that I denied myself her presence at all times in worldly life; for that I desired that we again might see each other in heavenly glory, ~~soulless~~, before the face of the Eternal Judge, where our faithful love shall continue, where we ever may enjoy our wishes, happiness with angels, in the bright city. Say to her also that she shall commit to the tomb this bone-case; inclose with clay in its dark chamber this soulless body; there shall it awhile after remain in its earth-house."

After this poetical legend of St. Guthlac comes in the Exeter Book another paraphrase of the Song of Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, which occurs in Cædmon. Then follows a long poem on the myth of the Phoenix, a paraphrase of the 'Carmen de Phenice,' ascribed to Lactantius, made by one who was among the best of the old Anglo-Saxon poets, in order that he might complete and ennoble it by the addition of a second part which should convert it, point by point, into an allegory of the

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Kemble finds the story, as given by the Anglo-Saxon poet, in a Greek MS. of 'The Acts of Matthew and Andrew,' in the Royal Library at Paris.

<sup>2</sup> See the note on page 248.

life of the Christian. The next poem in this collection is the Legend of St. Juliana, who maintained her Christian purity, in the days of the tyrant Maximian, against the love of the young heathen Heliseus. Being given up to him by her father Africanus, she bore torments and resisted guiles of the devil, though he came to her, in angel's form, with a feigned message from on high. The devil, when fire, scattering itself, would not burn St. Juliana, counselled her persecutor that she should be thrust into a pot of boiling lead; but the pot burst when she was put into it, the scattered lead killed seventy-five of the heathen band, and there was no mark of fire upon her garment. At last, however, Juliana's soul was led to lasting joy by stroke of sword; and Heliseus and his band all perished in a shipwreck. Then, says the poet of himself—

“My soul shall go on its journey from my body, I myself know not whither. I shall from this seek another, unknown land, according to my past works, for my deeds of old. Sad shall depart **C**, **Y**, and **N**. The King will be stern, the giver of victories, when with sin, stained **E**, **W**, and **U** trembling shall wait what to him he will doom after his deeds in return for his life. **L F** shall tremble.”

Here, therefore, we meet again the author of the Legend of St. Helen. The next poem of the Wanderer is a plaint of the changes or chances of man's life, leading to an ending with the thought, “Well is it for him who seeketh mercy and comfort of the Father who is in heaven, where all our fastness standeth.” The piece copied next into the old MS. book is on the various gifts and pursuits of men, which are named by the poet in rapid succession. “One here on earth cares for possession of worldly treasure. One is poor, a luckless man, yet he is skilful in the arts of mind. . . . One is eloquent; one is in hunting chaser of fierce beasts. One is dear to the world-rich men.” But the long list leads to and ends with a lesson of the beauty and wisdom of God's works, and how—

“He variously corrects the pride of the children of men and dispenses His gifts; to one in dignities, to one in arts, to one in aspect, to one in war; to one man he gives a tender heart, a well-ordered mind, one to his lord faithful. Thus worthily the Lord widely soweth his goodness; ever, therefore, may He have power and light-bearing praise, who giveth life to us and maketh His tender spirit known to men.”

As pure is the Christian spirit of the next poem in this volume,

a Father to his Son. The next is conceived as the song of one who is among the spring-flowers, hearing the cuckoo, and looks back to the stormy perils of the sea traversed in his youth. The perils again live in his earnest song; from his detail of them he passes to reflection on the changes of life. "Days are passed away; all the pomp of earth's kingdom; kings are not now, nor emperors, nor gold-givers. . . . Glory is humbled; the honours of earth wax old and sear." And to this end the song leads. "Let us consider where we may have a home, and then think how we may come thither, and then also prepare ourselves that we may go thereto, into the eternal happiness where life depends on the Lord's love." The next poem in the Book sets forth Christian morality, and then the Traveller's or Glee-man's Song, already described, precedes another song on the Various Fortunes of Men. Morality then takes the form of Anglo-Saxon proverbs. I will give the sense of a few. "The blind of heart shall lose his eyes. He shall not see the bright sun or moon. That will be pain in his mind, inasmuch as he alone knows it." "Hateful is he who claims land, dear he who offers more." "No man gains too much." The following may have been a small strain of domestic song, heard now and then on shipboard:—

"Dear is the welcome guest to the Frisian wife, when the vessel stands, his ship is come, and her husband to his home, her own provider. And she welcomes him in, washes his weedy garment, and clothes him anew. It is pleasant on shore to him whom his love awaits!"

To a song on the Wonders of Creation next succeeds the only known example of an Anglo-Saxon rhyming poem. It is almost incomprehensible; but Mr. Thorpe finds it to be a free paraphrase of a passage in Job, with words perverted to make them rhyme. The Panther is described then, in another poem, as a beast with variegated skin, like Joseph's coat; of whom it is fabled that when he has eaten food he rests in secret darkness for three nights, and, when he wakes refreshed, a sweet sound comes from his mouth, followed by an odour more winsome than that of all the flowers. This fable is applied to our Lord, who, on—

"The third day from darkness rose. That was a sweet smell, winsome and pleasant all the world through, when to that fragrance soothfast men on every

side thronged in crowds from all the round of earth's region. As St. Paul said, 'Manifold over mid-earth are the mercies which the Almighty Father bestoweth on us for our salvation, and the only hope of all creatures above and beneath.' That is a noble savour."

The whale, "cruel and fierce to seafarers," is also sung; and of him there is a fable that, when hungry, he emits sweet odour from his mouth wherewith he attracts the fishes:—

"Then suddenly around the prey the grim gums crash together. So is to every man who often and negligently in this stormy world lets himself be deceived by sweet odour. . . . Hell's latticed doors have not return or escape, or any outlet for those who enter, any more than the fishes, sporting in ocean, can turn back from the whale's grip."

And the end of all is exhortation to seek peace with the Lord of our salvation.

The Address of the Soul to the Body, and the Song of Deor the Bard, precede the closing collection of riddles, contrived to the same moral and religious end; among which are interspersed by the copyist, as of like sense and purport, the Exile's Complaint, nine verses upon the Day of Judgment, the Harrowing of Hell, and a religious Supplication.

In addition to this body of poetry, we have some lesser records of Anglo-Saxon verse. There is a noble fragment of a poem on Judith in the same MS. which contains Beowulf<sup>1</sup>. It was first printed as prose at the end of Thwaites's Heptateuch. A few Anglo-Saxon hymns and prayers are among MSS. in the Cotton Collection<sup>2</sup> and in the Bodleian.

Psalm,  
Hymns,  
Prayers,  
Judith and  
other frag-  
ments.

An Anglo-Saxon paraphrase, partly in prose, partly in verse, attached to a Latin MS. of the Psalms, written in the eleventh century, has been edited by Mr. Thorpe from the original in the Royal Library at Paris.<sup>3</sup> It has been pointed out by Professor Dietrich<sup>4</sup> that the metrical paraphrase, from Psalm 51 to 150, was made in the eighth century, perhaps by Adhelm. A

<sup>1</sup> Vitellius, A. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Three prayers are in Julius, A. 2, and there are a Hymn and the 50th Psalm in Vespasian, D. vi. More proverbs are in Tiberius, B. I., 2.

<sup>3</sup> 'Libri Psalmorum Versio Antiqua Latina cum Paraphrasi Anglo-Saxonica partim soluta oratione, partim metricè composita, nunc primum e Cod. MS. in Bibl. Regia Parisiensi adservato descripsit et edidit B. Thorpe, Oxon. 1835.'

<sup>4</sup> Haupt's 'Zeitschrift für d. Alterthum,' ix. 214-222, quoted though Dr. Grein's 'Bibliothek der A. S. L.'

fragment of a fine poem on the Grave is written in the margin of a volume of Homilies in the Bodleian Library.<sup>1</sup> A poem of Salomon and Saturn, in the form of dialogue, exists in two manuscripts, both defective. One, in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge,<sup>2</sup> contains the poem from verse 30 to verse 306; the other, in the same collection,<sup>3</sup> is a copy of Alfred's Beda, with verses 1-94 of Salomon and Saturn written on its margin. Mr. Kemble has edited this work for the Ælfrie Society.<sup>4</sup> Saturn, in the poem, seeking from Salomon knowledge of the Paternoster, is instructed of its virtues, and those of the word of God, which is golden, stoned with gems, and silver-leaved. Among the successive letters of the word Paternoster, power is distributed; and thus in mystical way, according to a humour of the East, there is represented contest between the Paternoster and the Devil, who, as a prose continuation of the dialogue sets forth, will take thirty shapes, and be met in each by the Pater Noster. In answer to questions of Saturn, "What kind of head hath the Pater Noster?" "What is the Pater Noster's beauteous heart like?" "But what is his garment like?" Salomon replies in strains of Eastern hyperbole. In the second part of the poem, Salomon and Saturnus exchange at random metrical proverbs or wise counsels in a dialogue that does not aim much at coherence. Among spurious books of Scripture was a 'Contradictio Salomonis,' withdrawn from the Canon in the fifth century by Pope Gelasius; and of this, or some work like it, the Anglo-Saxon poem of 'Salomon and Saturnus'—wholly wanting the characteristics of the Anglo-Saxon mind—may have been a version.

<sup>1</sup> MSS. ÆE. F. 4, 12.

<sup>2</sup> MSS. No. 422.

<sup>3</sup> MSS. No. 41.

<sup>4</sup> 'The Dialogue of Salomon and Saturnus, with an Historical Introduction, by J. M. Kemble. London, 1848.'

## CHAPTER IX.

PUT books aside, and come abroad into the sun of the meadows and shade of the woods,—climb the round hillside where the harebell waves in the land-breeze on the smooth slippery turf by the sea,—look far out over the glitter of waters on which swim, ghostly leviathans, the great cloud-shadows; come, and for this true, great life of nature—put away dullness of books!

Books and  
the world.

To many a close student that is the summer-call of some fond home-bird voice: but he has not yet learnt to read who goes, as from death to life, out of a bookroom into the bright, busy world. It is well for the young student, when he is allowed leisure and freedom to feel even those books of which he is required, in days of pupillage, to know all the contents. For he profits more who has been near to the true mind of another, though he may remember not a tithe of all that other may have told him, than he who has forced every communicated fact into his head, crushing its life out in the act of violence, and so may have turned his brain into a sepulchre of all the sciences. The right reader has only a completer sense than they who do not read, of that great life of nature from which books are too often considered—even by those who love them, but who love them best for accidents of age, or size, or binding—something separate. As to their material form, books are excellent in proportion as they bring the writer's exact mind home to the reader with as little as may be of mechanical friction in the means employed for its conveyance. As the writer himself should seek only the simplest words and clearest sentences for the precise conveyance of his thoughts with the least possible diversion of attention to the form of language that expresses them, so in the mechanical form of a book, whatever obstructs precision and ease of delivery by calling attention from the thought expressed to the pound of paper through which it is spoken, is a fault. The right student



profits by familiarity with many forms of print, paper, and language, in becoming less and less conscious of the mechanism through which he gets at truth. The material veil becomes for him thinner and thinner, and his books are for him more and more, when he reads them, disembodied souls. But what are these less than the chief of all the varied forms of life on earth? They are as real a part of nature as the meadows and the woods, the harebells on the hillside, or the cloud-shadows that float upon the great broad sea,—so real a part that none have felt them who have not felt through them a fuller, nobler, happier sense of the glory and the beauty in the whole round of God's world. It was but a jest to say "God made the country, and man made the town." Let us feel, apart from our own kind, the universal harmony that makes the souls of men yearn with strange sympathy, as in the calm of the forest large thoughts are awakened even by the chirp and flutter of the birds, the click of insects, and the rustle of the wind among the leaves that joins to the swelling sense of God-made earth, the murmur as of a great sea. But the town is a forest, too; a forest of men, who had the same Maker as the trees, who were made also to a nobler pattern and for greater ends. The cry and flutter of souls are heard there, for the cry of birds—of souls in their deep human love and their deep human suffering. The growth in that great forest is, as in the green wood beyond it, by the breath of all surrounding influences; and that is not more surely a process of nature, by which the first tender leaves out of the acorn break through the hard ground, than the force whereby the spirit of man presses, among the stones, up from the hard earth heavenward. The town, that forest of men, is but one form more of the manifold creation, bound together by innumerable harmonies. And the fruitage of that nobler forest is stored in our books. Nay, may we not rather say that a well-chosen library is of all forests in nature the one most beautiful in itself, and in truest harmony with every sight and sound of life, a forest of men's souls. Whether we pass, then, from the books to the fresh breeze upon the hills, or out of the wood into the meadow, it is but the same act of passing from one form of nature to another.

And as we proceed now with this sketch of the growth of a

great people, from age to age, in the stir of its best minds, each labouring in more or less accordance with the common mind of its own day ; and as we come into the company of men, long dead, who were active workers in the world—although the best of them laboured, as if buried alive, in a monastic library—let us endeavour to know how their busy life allied itself to all that was fresh, real, and hopeful in God's universe, and send our hearts back to them with our memories. Theirs was a time when there was yet no prose literature in the language of the people. Reading was a power of the learned ; but the common literature of the people was preserved and spread traditionally by oral recitation, and by act of memory. Success in oral delivery was best attained by help of musical accompaniment to words pleasantly attuned ; and, for a literature that was to live chiefly in the memory, the metrical form—with its artificial aids—was far fitter than prose. It is for such reasons that the earliest remains of the literature of any people are almost invariably metrical. But if the people when feasting their bodies gratified their minds also with oral literature, now designed by their teachers to be furthermore wholesome to their souls, the teachers themselves were at the same time seeking of each other help towards their own enlightenment, and could learn little more than the elements of knowledge orally. The studious monk in England sought for his use all spiritual and intellectual help Rome or the East could send ; and the community of religious students, who were then the chief teachers of Europe, laborious men scattered thinly among the half-civilised multitude in many lands, and speaking many native languages, aided each other, taught their immediate pupils, and maintained for a time the best life of their own countries and of Europe in a great exchange of knowledge for all nations, by the use of Latin as the common speech of their republic. In England, then, both in and after Cædmon's time, while there is no prose literature in the language of the people, the religious scholars who are the chief, almost the sole exponents of the English mind, adopt the common language of the learned, and in that give full expression to the spirit of their race. They are English studies, English aspirations that we follow through the Latin literature of the

The Anglo-Saxon Bookmen.

Metrical Anglo-Saxon.

Latin Prose.

Anglo-Saxon monasteries, from Aldhelm onward. The accident that use is made of a conventional language leaves the native character unchanged. And again I urge, for it cannot be too distinctly felt, that in dating back to the earliest, and tracing step by step from its origin a nation's path of thought, the proper motive is no taste for the mere dryness of a study of antiquities. The old facts that concern us are not old dead twigs and branches of the tree of knowledge; but the old main stem, and the first branches from it, whence more branches have sprung that now lie hidden under the rich leafage of the present. Our Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton will be understood the better, if we see how the sap rises from the root by which their genius was fed. We have seen in Cædmon, one green shoot from the sap that is mounting Miltonward. We shall see, hereafter, how also the English drama took its rise among the monks. But in this present chapter we shall especially find them cherishing, in the studious leisure of their monasteries, that taste for allegory and enigma which influenced most strongly the whole early literature of this country,—as of all Europe, monastery-taught,—vigorous in the 'Vision of Piers Plowman;' touching Chaucer in the 'Romaunt of the Rose;' displayed in Stephen Hawes's 'Passetyme of Pleasure,' or in Dunbar's 'Golden Targe;' and perfected among us by Spenser in the 'Faerie Queene.'

Italian influence upon the literature of the Anglo-Saxon Church.

There was in the seventh century a strong Italian influence upon English church literature, maintained by the zeal with which the Bishop of Rome laboured, through emissaries and otherwise, to conquer the disposition of the native British Church to connect Christianity with outward signs—in time of Easter-keeping, form of Ordination, Marriage-service, re-baptism of heretics, tonsure, and otherwise—of adhesion to the discipline of Churches of the East. After a brisk contest, sustained through more than a single generation, England was so far annexed to the spiritual dominion of the West, that not only the English priests who were warm in the Roman cause made frequent journeys to Rome for instruction of all kinds, but the whole Church was agreed to hold its spiritual power from the Bishop who, by right of direct succession in the laying on of hands, was regarded as the apostolical successor of St. Peter. The spiritual power was used to enlarge, with

good intent, the temporal strength of the Church; and against the consequent encroachment on their rights, temporal chiefs in this country were at a very early date to be found in resistance. The conflict which exercised afterwards so strong an influence upon the English mind and literature began very early. Meanwhile grants of land to the churches made the chiefs in the Church rich. They built great abbeys and monasteries; they went to Rome and Gaul in search of precious manuscripts, which they could there buy or cause to be copied, and supplied the studious monks at home with writings of the Fathers of the Church, on which they could employ the leisure left them by their frequently recurring exercises of devotion. That they might read the Scriptures and the expositions of them by the Fathers, pupils of the monks and nuns, and the monks and the nuns themselves, were diligently grounded and confirmed in knowledge of Latin; and, when possible, also of Greek and Hebrew. But Hebrew was a rare accomplishment, and for those who did not advance to Greek, the best works of several of the Greek fathers had been translated into Latin.

It was from their study among the writings of the Fathers of the Church, while they were devoting all their own wit to religious ends, that the old scholars of the monasteries drew that taste for learned puzzles, allegorical incidents in lives of saints, edifying applications and interpretations of all things, and the translation of plain facts of Scripture into elaborate allegory, out of which arose a very strong influence upon the literature of Italy herself and of all Europe.

Origin of the  
early Allego-  
rical literature.

But we shall still find the religious practical mind under these apparently trivial exercises of English wit. The lightest of them are spent in the effort to enliven the path of the pupil, when he is not being enlivened by the rod, in his study of Latin; and the graver, except when the battle is fought for Rome on the question of celebration of Easter, dwell almost exclusively upon the essentials of Christian life. We shall find also the most energetic of those pious English monks joining to all his labours for the advancement of religious life an indefatigable effort to bring the best fruits of the learning of the East and West, and the pith of good literature extracted by his own toil from a costly library, together with the knowledge

The English  
mind in all.

gained by widely-extended personal inquiries, within compass of a few volumes that even a private scholar of small means could afford to have transcribed for his own use. We still see also in the early Anglo-Latin as in the Anglo-Saxon literature, an imagination powerful to seize upon and present with vivid truth to itself and others worthy conceptions of what was most real to it in life and religion; but even in its lighter recreations more suited to fit and full expression of a thought than to gay decoration of its surface. The course of the narrative must now show whether these general considerations rightly represent the life of the English mind as it was expressed in Latin by the first five or six generations of the Anglo-Saxon monks.

Theodore of Tarsus, who came into England in the latter half of the seventh century, and became Archbishop of Canterbury, was widely famous for his literary knowledge and his skill in Greek and Latin. He and his friend Abbot Adrian, African-born, whom William of Malmesbury celebrates as "fountain of letters and river of arts," were honoured as the first great teachers of the arts and sciences, and of the languages of Rome and Greece to the youth of Britain. One of the pupils of Adrian became more famous than his master, as Aldhelm of Sherborne.

Aldhelm, a poet and divine, and the churchman Wilfrid, celebrated by the earliest of our biographers, lived in the days of Cædmon; and they both died in the year 709. But when Wilfrid died, he was an old man of seventy-five, whose restless energy made him conspicuous in early manhood.

Wilfrid, born in the year 634, was of about Cædmon's age—that is, he was forty-five years old when Cædmon, "well advanced in years," entered Abbess Hilda's monastery. He was a noble of Bryneich (Bernicia), whom the harshness of a stepmother had driven from home at the age of fourteen. He then entered the household of Queen Eanfleda, who appointed him, since he was a pious youth, to attend on an old noble, named Cadda, then about to direct one of the monasteries of Lindisfarne. As Wilfrid learnt at Lindisfarne the Celtic or eastern views of church discipline, Eanfleda sent him, by his own wish, at the age of nineteen, to her brother Earconbert, King of Kent, who shipped him to Rome in company with

another noble youth. His companion was the same Benedict Biscop who founded afterwards Bede's Jarrow monastery. On his way home he was present at the murder of a Count Dalfinus, who was his host at Lyons. "Who," asked the assassins, "is that fair youth who is making himself ready for death?" They were told, "A Saxon from Britain," and said "Let him go—do not touch him." After his return to England, fully indoctrinated in the Roman discipline, Wilfrid, A.D. 661, received from King Alfrid the monastery founded at Ripon by priests of the Culdee school, whom Alfrid, a hot Romanist, had expelled for their antagonism to the Roman notions of church discipline. Three years afterwards Wilfrid was ordained a priest in the monastery by Agilbert, a foreigner, the Bishop of the West Saxons. This was in the year (664) of the conference held at Whitby for settlement of the questions of discipline between the Culdee and the Roman teachers. Wilfrid and Agilbert spoke at that conference for the Roman usage; Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne, and Abbess Hilda for the Celtic. The two kings, Oswin and Alfrid, presided, and Alfrid broke up the conference by declaring, "As St. Peter keeps the keys and is greater in heaven than your Columbkil, I shall follow the precepts of Peter, lest coming to heaven-gate St. Peter should deny me & cast off his office, and refuse to let me into happiness." Colman resigned his bishopric, which was then given to Tuda, a Culdee, who consented to the Roman time of keeping Easter, and the Roman view of all other disputed points. Tuda died in a few months by pestilence; and to secure better spiritual care of Northumbria, Wilfrid was then appointed to the vacant see of York. Wilfrid went to Gaul for canonical ordination; because there was then only one bishop in England canonically ordained; was consecrated with great pomp at Compiègne, and chaired by a dozen bishops in a golden chair. He was away three years, and during his absence the party of the British church so far prevailed that the see of York was given away from him to Chad, a disciple of Aidan, beloved everywhere for his humble piety. Wilfrid's vessel also, when he returned, was stranded on the coast of Sussex, and claimed by the Pagan wreckers as gift of the sea, its goods for their goods, its men for their slaves. The crew fought for themselves and their ship till by good

fortune the tide rose high enough to float them. Wilfrid retired then to his monastery of Ripon. The influence of Theodore as Archbishop of Canterbury established in 669 the Roman rule accepted by the south of England. Canterbury conquered York, and the gentle St. Chad, submitting to deposition as one uncanonically ordained by British bishops, received for his obedience Roman consecration to the bishopric of Lichfield. Thus Wilfrid after all became Archbishop of York. He spent magnificently his revenues in church architecture—brought to the church out of Gaul glass for the windows, so that the dirty birds could no longer fly in and out,<sup>1</sup> repaired it, adorned it, roofed it with lead, obtained much admiration also for the new church that he built at Ripon. The glory of this was surpassed, however, by the triumph of his architectural taste at Hexham, where the church he built was thought to be the finest on this side the Alps. Wilfrid, rich as a king, and riding abroad with a retinue dressed and armed as a king's following, also brought his church into collision with King Egfrid, who resolved, therefore, with Theodore's consent, if not on Theodore's active suggestion, to cut the see of York into three pieces. The division was so made as to exclude Wilfrid himself altogether. He then rambled to Rome, was well received by the Pope, came home, and fared no better for that in his struggle with the Northumbrian king, whose first wife he is said to have persuaded from her husband's side into a nunnery. His Papal bulls were taken away from him, and he was imprisoned for a few months by the Northumbrian king in evidence of contempt for Papal orders. Theodore, too, was still opposing him. Then Wilfrid spent his energies in preaching to those savage Pagans of the Sussex coast who lived under an independent chief of their own, and with whom he had fought when they attacked his stranded vessel. These people had no missionaries among them, except one poor monk, named Dicuil, of the faithful and devoted Church of the Culdres, who lived with five or six brethren at Bosham, near Chichester, between the forest and the sea. Wilfrid fastened upon the

<sup>1</sup> Says Eddius :—"Nam culmina antiquata tecti distillantia, fenestraq[ue] aperta, avibus nidificantibus intro et foras volitantibus, et parietes incultæ, omni spurcitia imbrium et avium, horribiles manebant."

navian story has been cited by Bouterwek, of a poet Thorleifr, buried under a barrow where Halbiörn a goatherd pastured his flock. Halbiörn struggling in vain to sing in praise of the dead bard, saw the hill open one night and a huge figure rise out of it. The figure touched his tongue with its finger, recited some verses and retired again into the tomb. Halbiörn remembered the verses, and himself became a poet. Sir Francis Palgrave, who had at first seen nothing incredible in Bede's account of Cædmon, was struck by an analogous story in a fragment entitled "*Præfatio in Librum Antiquum linguâ Saxonica conscriptum*,"<sup>1</sup> setting forth that "Louis the Pious being desirous to furnish his subjects with a version of the Holy Scriptures, applied to a Saxon bard of great talent and fame. The poet, a peasant or husbandman, when entirely ignorant of his art, had been instructed in a dream to render the precepts of the Divine Law into verse and measure of his native language. His translation, now unfortunately lost, to which the fragment was a preface, comprehended the whole of the Bible. I see no reason to doubt that the Anglo-Saxon Paraphrase with the origination of which Louis the Pious was patriotically credited by a French writer was simply Cædmon's own, with the usual account of its origin prefixed to it. Why should a French King propose to give the Scriptures to his subjects in the Anglo-Saxon language? It was urged also by Sir Francis Palgrave, when he had thus begun to doubt, that the names of Anglo-Saxon persons were always formed of significant words. There is, he said, no plain and definite Anglo-Saxon sense in the word Cædmon; but the first Book of Genesis is called, after its first words, in the Chaldee Paraphrase or Targum of Onkelos, b'Cadmin or b'Cadmon, meaning 'In the beginning;' and from that term it is strongly to be suspected that the name of Cædmon, as the poet of the Paraphrase that opened with the Book of Genesis, was transformed into the name of a person.

"But," it was further observed, "in addition to the value of the word Cadmon as denoting the Chaldaic Book of Genesis, the name of Adam Cadmon also holds a most important station in Cabalistic theology; the adjective o.

<sup>1</sup> '*Bibliotheca Patrum*,' vol. xvi. p. 609. Paris, 1644.

<sup>2</sup> He was the Cosmos in the figure of a man. The reader who thinks the



epithet Cadmon in pure Hebrew signifies "from the East;" and until we can suggest a better explanation of the name given to the Anglo-Saxon poet, it will be difficult to avoid the conclusion, that using the Targum as his text, and being also familiar with the Cabalistic doctrines, he assumed the name of Cadmon either from the book which he translated, or from the Cabalistic nomenclature; or that, having arrived in Britain from the East, he designated himself as the Eastern visitor or pilgrim.'"<sup>1</sup>

We have seen that all dispute between the Cymric and Gaelic Christians of Britain and the Italian missionaries who came with and after Augustine, depended on conflict between usages of the eastern and the western church. The abbey at Whitby was, in the north of England, the chief stronghold of the Culdees of Iona, who drew their religious knowledge and church discipline, not out of Rome, but from Jerusalem and Egypt. As the layman frequently dedicated himself under a new name, to religious work, it may very well be that the learned men of Hilda's monastery found a name for their paraphrast of Scripture in the Chaldee title of the first book of the sacred text, which it was his particular service to God to diffuse among his countrymen. Again, as he versified the history they gave him, the Rabbinical character of a few extraneous incidents in the narrative connected with the story of creation would come from the east through them to him. It was not necessary that, simply to hear what was told him, he should be himself an Oriental scholar. Thus far, then, and setting aside the more far-fetched suggestion of Cabalism, which is not very consistent with its companion-theory, and is in itself not very probable, we may assign much weight to Sir Francis Palgrave's theory of the origin of the mere name of Cædmon, without discrediting in anything essential the simple text of Bede. But if we are sometimes enthusiasts in trifles and wish to believe that Cædmon was also the lay name of the poet, let us content ourselves with the replies of both a German and a French scholar, Dr. Bouterwek and Professor Sandras,<sup>2</sup> who correct the statement that the word

point worth a reference will find a digest of the Cabalistic doctrines in a 'Life of Cornelius Agrippa,' by the present writer. Vol. I. pp. 69-81.

<sup>1</sup> 'Archæologia,' London, 1832. Vol. xxiv. p. 342.

<sup>2</sup> 'De Cædmone poeta Anglo-Saxonum v. ætistissimo brevis Dissertatio. Scripsit Carol. Guil. Bouterwek, Phil. Dr. Gymnasii Elberfeldani Director.' Elberfeld, 1845. 'De Carminibus Anglo-Saxonicis Cædmōni Adjudicatis

heathens with his restless energy, reconverted the king and queen of these people who had already been once baptized, received from them a grant of Selsea Bill on which he built a monastery, and thus is said to have converted Sussex, afterwards also the Isle of Wight, when it was conquered by Caedwalla, King of Wessex, whom as a young exile in Sussex Wilfrid had protected. One fourth of the Isle of Wight was given by Caedwalla to the Church. Theodore, now more than fourscore years of age, could not refuse to recognise the rare vigour of Wilfrid's character, which had been thus brought home to his own doors, and Wilfrid was, in 686, recalled to York. But although the crown of King Ecgfrid, fallen in battle with the Piets, had passed to a King Aldfrid, celebrated for his piety and learning, still the old disputes arose. Caedwalla might give away a fourth part of the Isle of Wight, but the blood of the Northumbrian was hot against extravagant claims of domain for the Roman Church, and resisted the pretensions of Rome to dominion over him in everything that a priest could distort into a point of ecclesiastical discipline. The Anglo-Saxon clergy themselves, though the Roman church discipline now prevailed among them, and their spiritual loyalty to Rome was strong, were strong also, even at that early time, in resistance to all claims of the Pope for dominion in England as a foreign prince. Wilfrid was deposed by an assembly of the English prelates. Again, therefore, Wilfrid, growing old, toiled off to Rome; he was absent for ten years or more, was dangerously sick on his way home, but returned armed with the Pope's letters, at the age of seventy. He was again shut out of Northumbria, and was at no time restored to York; but he received, through the subsequent course of events, Ripon and Hexham. Peace was made for a while in the English Church, and Wilfrid not long afterwards (A.D. 709) died, on a progress through his diocese of Ripon, at the monastery of Oundle, to which, says Æddi, or Eddius Stephanus, his friend and biographer, he "crept rather than journeyed."

Of the friend, Eddius Stephanus, the earliest of our biographers, who wrote the interesting life of Wilfrid,<sup>1</sup> which is

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<sup>1</sup> One MS. of it is in the Cotton Collection, Vespasian, D. vi.

the chief source of these details, little is known. He told much of his friend, but nothing of himself. Bede Eddius, the first English biographer. says that Wilfrid invited him from Kent to teach in Northumbria the Gregorian method of chanting, which, with the graces of church architecture, formed part of the Benedictine rule, that had in Wilfrid its most zealous supporter. Eddius, who is called also Wilfrid's chaplain, wrote at the request of Acca, Bishop of Hexham, and Tathbercht, his narrative of Wilfrid's life, which was thus made the subject of the first independent piece of genuine biography in our literature.<sup>1</sup> Wilfrid was sketched by Bede in his history, but he was the subject also of several other early biographies; one is a version of Eddius into hexameters, made in the tenth century by Fredegodus, a monk of Dover, at the request of Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury. Another is the life of Wilfrid compiled from the existing narratives, in the beginning of the twelfth century, by Eadmer, chaplain of Archbishop Anselm.

From the first biographer we pass to our first autobiographer, who might, however, possibly be otherwise ranked with greater truth as the first English artist in prose fiction.

Egwin of Worcester, allied to the royal house of Mercia, was, at the close of the seventh century, a favourite counsellor of King Ethelred, by whom he was made, about the year 692, Bishop of Worcester. His severe conduct in his bishopric caused him to be accused at Rome, and, with exemplary humility, he set out thither to defend himself, travelling the whole way with fetters locked on his bare legs. Why did he so? This was the first evidence he gave of his inventive genius. When the fetters were locked on him he publicly threw their key into the Avon. Duplicate keys have been heard of; but Egwin himself testified that, after he reached

<sup>1</sup> There is a MS. of Eddius in the Cotton Collection, *Vespasian, D. vi.*; from which, copied for him by Dean Gale, Mabillon first printed the work. It will be found in the '*Acta Sanctorum*' of the Bollandists. There are good sketches of Wilfrid in Mr. Thomas Wright's '*Biographica Brit. Lit.*,' Anglo-Saxon period, and in the recently published first volume of the late Mr. Dixon's '*Fasti Eboracenses. Lives of the Archbishops of York.*' By the Rev. W. H. Dixon, M.A., Canon Residentiary of York, &c. Edited and enlarged by the Rev. James Raine, M.A., Secretary of the Surtees Society, London, 1863.

Rome, the key found by his cook in the belly of a fish of the Tiber—a middling sized salmon, caught or bought for him by his companions—was that thrown by him into the English river. It could only have been so miraculously sent to him for his deliverance from bonds. The miracle was too good to be wasted by the Church, and the sinner was received, by virtue of it, as a saint. “Who,” says his biographer, the prior Dominic, “did not struggle to see him?—who did not make haste to be blessed by him?” Egwin came home with such letters that he was not only restored to his see, but also made tutor to King Ethelred’s children. Ethelred also gave him, on the spot where the key was cast into the Avon, the forest land kept by four swineherds, brothers Eoves and Ympa, and brothers Trottuc and Cornuc, of whom the chief, named Eoves, is said to have lived where Egwin built in 703 the monastery of Eoves-homo or Evesham. Eoves had told him that, in hunting for a sow, he came in the wood upon a vision of three divine ladies—one with a book in her hand, the other two engaged with her in singing psalms. Egwin, visiting barefoot with psalm and prayer the spot where the wonder occurred to Eoves, beheld the same vision of the Virgin and two Angels. He then dedicated the place to God and the Virgin; and Dominic significantly adds (for here is the key to the new fiction), “With many possessions begged from the kings of England he endowed this spot.” This he himself tells; for he wrote a history of the Foundation of Evesham, and also a Book of Visions, which, although they do not remain as substantive works, furnish the substance of a life of Egwin extant in a MS. of the tenth century.<sup>1</sup> Having

<sup>1</sup> MS. Cotton, Nero, E. i.; this unprinted MS., of the tenth or eleventh century, is ascribed by a heading in a modern hand to one Brithwald. Another MS. life of St. Egwin opens the ‘Chronicon Abbatiae de Evesham, ad annum 1418,’ edited this year (1863) by Mr. William Dunn Macray, Assistant in the Bodleian; in the invaluable series of ‘Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages,’ published by Government, under the direction of the Master of the Rolls. The ‘Life and Miracles of St. Egwin,’ prefixed to this ‘Chronicle of Evesham,’ were written at large by a Prior Dominic, who is incidentally mentioned in the Chronicle of Florence of Worcester as having been Prior at Evesham in the year 1125. Prior Dominic’s tediousness was abridged by Abbot Thomas of Marlborough (or de Marieberge), whom we shall hereafter meet with as the hero and chronicler of

finished his monastery, Egwin went to Rome to get a charter for it, on his return solemnly consecrated the church, and having resigned his see, spent in it the remainder of his days, much favoured with Visions, dying in or before the year 720. Four hundred years afterwards it was said that, because the smiths at Alcester had tried to drown the sound of Egwin's preaching with the beating of their hammers, therefore ever since, and until that day, no smith could ever ply his trade properly at Alcester, or get a living there.

The humour of pious fraud in Egwin was too gross and self seeking. We leave him gladly, and before dwelling upon Aldhelm, the first writer of great mark in the Anglo-Saxon church, look northward to Iona for the beginner in another branch of literature, Adámnan, the writer of our most ancient book of travel, and to Willibald first English narrator of travels of his own.

Adámnan, the fourth Abbot of Iona since Columba's death, was in Northumbria at the beginning of the eighth century, and was there converted by Bede's abbot Adámnan, author of our first Book of Travel. Ceolfrid to the Romish calculation of Easter and the Roman tonsure. When he returned to Iona his monks refused to conform to his new views, and he passed on to the Gaels of Ireland, among whom he did succeed in spreading them. Nevertheless, when he came back to Iona his monks held to their British discipline, and he died before the question could arise whether he should keep Easter at one time and his monks at another, in the year 704. While at Iona Adámnan received as a guest a Frankish bishop Arculf, who, after visiting Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Constantinople, and seeing a volcanic eruption off the coast of Sicily, had suffered shipwreck on the western coast of Britain. Many things the pious Adámnan heard from his guest about the Holy Land that he had visited soon after it fell into the hands of the Arabs, and

Evesham, and who died in the year 1236. Another Life of Egwin is in the Bodleian, MS. Digby, 112, pp. 58-66. The unique MS. of the abridgment of Dominic's Life of Egwin and Marlborough's Chronicle is part of a large collection bequeathed to the Bodleian by Dr. Richard Rawlinson (Rawlinson, A. 287); and is a noble folio of 194 vellum leaves clearly written in double columns by the hand of Abbot Marlborough himself.

what he heard he wrote in a traveller's book, "*De Situ Terræ Sanctæ*," which he took, in or about the year 701, as a present to the Northumbrian King Aldfrid, who caused copies to be made for the use of his subjects. The narrative, reduced to the form of treatise, or a pilgrim's guide, is divided into three books, the first containing Arnulf's account of Jerusalem and its neighbourhood; the second treating of the rest of the Holy Land, with Egypt and the Nile; the third describing the chief sacred objects seen at Constantinople and the traveller's return. Adámnan wrote also a legendary life of St. Columba, founder of his monastery.<sup>1</sup>

Willibald, a West-Saxon of noble birth, with his father Richard, his brother Wunibald and his sister, famous afterwards as Saint Walpurgis, left England, probably <sup>Willibald.</sup> A.D. 718, and travelled over the land of the Franks to Rome. The father died at Lucca and the children all got fever at Rome. When they recovered, Willibald, then only about twenty-one years old, resolved, with his brother and sister, about the year 721, to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, a journey to which the account of Arculf's travels had given additional attraction among Anglo-Saxons. They went on their way, and learnt on the way that when there is an eruption of Etna the inhabitants of Catania show to the mountain the veil of St. Agatha, whereupon immediately the eruption ceases. At Emessa, their party having increased to the number of eight, they were imprisoned for a time by the Saracens, but, suffered at last to go free, proceeded on their journey to the Holy Places. At the end of two years they sailed on their return from Tyre. Afterwards, at the age of forty, Willibald became Bishop of Eichstadt, and the short extant account of his travels was taken down from the Bishop's own lips by a nun of Heidenheim, who was his kinswoman.

We are now free to speak of Aldhelm, poet and divine. He

<sup>1</sup> Adámnan's travels of Arculf were printed in 1672, in Mabillon's '*Acts of the Benedictine Saints*,' and previously, in a small quarto, at Ingolstadt in 1619. But I follow here Mr. Wright's '*Biog. Brit. Lit.*,' and his edition in Bohn's *Antiquarian Library*, of '*Early Travels in Palestine*,' comprising the narratives of Arculf, Willibald, Bernard, Sæwulf, Sigurd, Benjamin of Tudela, Sir John Maundeville, de la Brocquière and Maundrell.' London, 1848.

was said also to have been a King's nephew, son of a devout  
 Aldhelm. Kenten, brother of Ina, King of Wessex; but William

of Malmesbury repeats King Alfred's note upon this, that Ina had only one brother, whose name was Ingild. Aldhelm was well born, with original gifts and a most retentive memory. He completed in Kent his studies of Latin and Greek under the care of the learned Adrian, who came to England in the year 670, and became, while yet in his youth, a monk of Malmesbury; a monastery so slenderly endowed by its founder, a learned Scot, Meldun or Maildulph—whence Meldum's byrig, Malmesbury—that the brethren scarcely had enough to eat. Aldhelm, however, if not a king's nephew, was of noble birth as well as a man of learning, eloquence, and piety. He obtained a grant of the monastery from the bishop in the year 672, rebuilt the church, and gathered to himself companions from all sides. Aldhelm was an expert musician, playing all the instruments used in his time; and as an English poet, whose native songs were popular in King Alfred's day (but of whom only the Latin verse remains), he lived and sang at the same time as Cædmon, being then, however, a young man of the next generation.

When the people would not come to church for sacred teaching, the clover abbot, simply shrewd, would tempt them with secular eloquence, and on one Sabbath day, when a great crowd of traders from different parts of the country came into Malmesbury, the abbot stationed himself on the bridge outside the town, where he caused some of those who would have passed to stay by him, and leaving their trade until the morrow, follow him into the church. William of Malmesbury, in his life of Aldhelm, gives on the authority of King Alfred another version of this incident, or a similar incident. He says that Aldhelm was unequalled as an inventor and singer of English verse, and that a song ascribed to him, which was still familiar among the people, had been sung by Aldhelm on the bridge between country and town, in the character of a gleeman, to keep the people from running home directly after mass was sung, as it was their habit to do, without waiting for the sermon. They

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Wharton. The other authority is the 'Life of St. Aldhelm,' by Faricius:

stopped as he sang, to listen for their pleasure, and he then so blended words of Scripture with his jesting that he brought health to their minds, when he could have done nothing if he had thought to manage them severely and by excommunication.

Aldhelm visited Pope Sergius at Rome, and obtained all the privileges and immunities the Pope could give, which were then confirmed by King Ina, for his monastery at Malmesbury, and for two others which he had built, one on the Frome dedicated to St. John the Baptist, and the other at Bradford which was afterwards demolished by the Danes. Some time after his return, Aldhelm wrote, in the year 706, a tract in support of the Roman time of keeping Easter, against what Rome called the heresy of the Britons. His piety is said to have been so great, that once, when beams were being lifted during the rebuilding of the church at Malmesbury, one beam, although cut to the same length as the others was found to have become miraculously shorter, and was a misfit. The workmen went to Aldhelm, who told them to trust in the power of the Virgin and to go on hauling. They did so, and before it was quite lifted to its place, the beam was found to be too long. Here it may very well be that, among men eager to recognise the supernatural, a miracle was produced in all good faith out of a two-fold miscalculation.

Hedda, the fifth bishop of the West Saxons, died in the year 705, and the bishopric was then divided into the two sees of Winchester and Sherborne, Aldhelm being elected by the primates, clergy and people, the first Bishop of Sherborne, with a diocese including the present counties of Dorset, Somerset, Wilts, Devon, and Cornwall.<sup>1</sup> He held the bishopric only four years, and died May 25, 709, at Dunting, while upon a circuit of instruction through his diocese. Aldhelm is said by tradition, when at Malmesbury, to have spent even winter nights up to his shoulders in a spring of cold water, reciting the Psalter. The spring was still called by his name in the time of the narrator.<sup>2</sup>

The chief prose work of Aldhelm, who wrote only in Latin,

<sup>1</sup> The See was removed three centuries afterwards to Wilton, then to Old Sarum, and lastly to New Sarum, or Salisbury.

<sup>2</sup> Capgrave in '*Legendis Novis Angliæ.*'



was a *Trochæus* in Praise of Virginité, dedicated to the sisterhood of Barking, a company of women vowed to single life, which was joined by Cuthburga, one of King Ina's sisters, after the dissolution of her brief marriage with Alfred, King of the Northumbrians. Cuthburga is said by William of Malmesbury to have been induced to go to Barking by the reading of Aldhelm's treatise in praise of Virginité; but her name is included among those of sisters specially addressed in its dedication. The chief poem of Aldhelm, in Latin hexameters, sets forth the same subject in verse. For at the end of the prose celebration he had said that, as he had tried to honour the glory of his subject in rhetorical narrative, so also if he lived he would try to celebrate it in verse also, "and the rhetorical foundations being as it were already laid and the prose walls constructed he would roof it with dactylic and trochaic tiles." Aldhelm wrote also to Acircius, a governor in the north, a book entitled "*De Septenario, de Metris, Ænigmatibus ac Pedum Regulis*," first citing the numerous examples of the Scriptural use of the number Seven; adding to this a small treatise on Latin Prosody, which passes into the form of a dialogue between pupil and teacher; and then presenting to the pupil in Latin hexameter a collection of enigmas, which he is asked to solve and scan. They are introduced by a prologue forming an acrostic both with the initial and final letters of its successive lines, "*Aldhelmus cecinit Millenis Versibus Odas*"—Aldhelm sang the Poems in a Thousand Lines. About 760 of the lines remain. These enigmas are arranged, according to their length, in sections; the first section containing those of four lines, the next those of five, then 'hexasticha,' and so steadily on to the sixteen-lined poems, omitting only the fourteen-lined. Upon these follows a polystich in eighty lines or more. Aldhelm imitates professedly the example of the enigmas of Coelius Firmianus Symposius, a Latin poet of the fourth century, whose verses are sometimes attributed to Cœcilius Firmianus Lactantius, 'the Christian Cicero.' Lactantius lived at the close of the third and early in the fourth century, and he wrote, while a student of rhetoric at Sicca, in Africa, a lost book entitled "*Symposium, or the Banquet*," to which this collection of a hundred enigmas with a prologue may have belonged, and from

which they may have been often separately transcribed under their name of "*Ænigmata Symposii*." These enigmas of Symposius, or of the Symposium, are three-lined triplets. Aldhelm begins therefore with the four-lined.

In Aldhelm's enigmas is abundant evidence of the priest's pleasant ingenuity. They represent part of his secular amusement, and bear witness to the delight in nature that was part of his poetical instinct; for they nearly all relate to the life of the world. One of the four-lined enigmas, not written for Barking, raises a perplexity of eyes and fingers; and the answer to it is Mother of Twins. The subject was tempting. There is also an enneastich '*de scrofâ pręgnante*.' Among the enigmas upon natural objects—earth, wind, fire, cloud, Nature herself, the elements, rainbow, moon, salt, heliotrope, silkworms, the peacock, salamander, bee, ostrich, dove, fish, locust, bat, the born blind, cat, beaver, swallow, crow, unicorn, and the long final polystich on all creation—a few works of art are included as subjects, representing, it may be said, man in nature, such as the organ, the lighthouse, the library shelf, the writer's pen. That on the pen<sup>1</sup> may be read thus, in an inevitably uncouth literal imitation of its sense and form.

"Me, dead-white, long ago the shining pelican brought forth,  
Who with an open throat from the pit's depth sup up the waters.  
Through the white plains I march, without any crook in the footpath,  
And on the bright white way I leave my ærulean footprints,  
Darkening lustrous fields with the blackness of twisting and turning.  
Nor does it yet suffice that the plains are traversed by one track,  
But to a thousand paths is rather the byway extended,  
Which then who do not stray has led to the summits of heaven."

After the enigmas the dialogue is resumed, and, in reply to the questions of Discipulus, Magister tells of the rules governing

<sup>1</sup> "*De Penna Scriptoria*."

"Me pridem genuit candens oñocrotalus alban,  
Gutturę qui patulo sorbet de gurgite lymphas.  
Pergo per albentes directo<sup>o</sup> tramite campos,  
Candentique via vestigia cęrula linquo,  
Lucida nigratis fuscans anfractibus arva.  
Nec satis est unum per campos pandere callem  
Semita quin potius milleno tramite tendit,  
Quę non errantes ad cęli culmina vexit."

the feet of Latin metres; and the discourse, therefore, is now of trochee, tribrach; molossus, anapaest, and so forth, closing with a final section upon Prosody in general. Thus Aldhelm sought to diffuse the knowledge acquired from his old master Adrian, and even women who devoted themselves to religious study have left traces—as did the Abbess Eadburga and her pupil Leobwitha—of their skill in Latin prose and verse. Without the learned tongues, how were the Scriptures and the fathers to be read?

In addition to the works already named, there remain also fourteen of Aldhelm's letters in Latin prose and a few Latin poems besides that in celebration of all famous virgins, which greater work contains about 2500 lines. The subjects of the chief of Aldhelm's lesser poems are "The Eight Principal Sins," but this work is perhaps a part of the poem on Virgins, as it treats of the eight vices obnoxious to chastity. This on the Eight Sins, is a poem in more than 450 lines. Aldhelm wrote also a Latin poem on a church built at Bugge, by the daughter of King Kentwin (eighty-six lines of hexameter); a poem on the Altars dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the twelve Apostles (a chain of thirteen short poems, to which is added a fourteenth in honour of Matthias, one of the seventy who took the place of Judas Iscariot). A poem of one-and-twenty lines was written on occasion of Aldhelm's entering the church of the Apostles at Rome. There is a fragment also, a hundred lines long, upon the Day of Judgment. Aldhelm's hexameters frequently graft on the Latin metre more or less of the Anglo-Saxon habit of alliteration, and in four poems he forsakes hexameter for short unrhymed alliterative lines, partly upon the Teutonic model.<sup>1</sup> These are inscribed 'From an unknown brother to an unknown sister.' One describes a storm and its passing, while all show an enjoyment of nature and a strain to bring the sense and the alliteration into proper harmony.

The same MS. which contains Aldhelm's praise of Virginity

<sup>1</sup> Thus—

" Atque responsa reddidi	Et fecundis graminibus
Quando profectus fueram	Atque facta infortunia
Per Carentem cornubiam.	Convexa cœli camera
Sub ventorum monarchia."	

and Eight Principal Vices, has also preceding them 'Christian Monostiches,' wise thoughts expressed proverbially in single hexameters, by an unknown author, whom Delrio,<sup>1</sup> I think rightly, believed to be also Aldhelm. Delrio partly grounded his opinion on the peculiar reference in one of the lines ("Octenas studeas vitiorum vincere turmas"—study to vanquish the eight troops of the vices) to the eight vices which Aldhelm, in view of his favourite topic, substituted for the seven sins of other teachers. I give the sense of a few of these lines: "Virtue is a great spell against demons. The reins of the tongue are fastened in the heart. Eyes are of no use to the blindly-minded. Happy he who learns through the whipping got by another. Keep your new friend and your wine till they are old. Enslave your mind to no malignant luxuries. The much talker strips his mind of its real merits. If you would be great, be moderate."<sup>2</sup>

Aldhelm's letters are less interesting than those of Boniface whose extant correspondence sketches vividly some Boniface. features of their time. Boniface, "the apostle of Germany," was a Devonshire man, named Winifred, and born at Crediton in the year 670. He was ordained priest in England in the year 700, and four years afterwards went as a missionary to the Frisians. He failed, came home in a year, and returned ten years later to remain in Friesland, and the neighbouring parts of Germany. Made bishop by Gregory II., he was an active supporter of the papacy, and in 738 the see of Mayence was made for him an Archbishopric. But he deputed his dignities

<sup>1</sup> 'S. Aldhelmi Prisci Occidentalium Saxonum Episcopi Poetica Nonnulla. E vetere Manuscripto per R. P. Martinum Delrio, Soc. Jesu. Presb., exscripta cum nonnullis ejusdem notulis.' Mayence, 1601. The MS. here used was then in the Abbey of St. Lawrence at Lüttich. There are MSS. of works of Aldhelm in Paris, the Bodleian, and elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> The works of Aldhelm, like the Letters of Boniface, the works of Bede, Alcuin, &c., are contained together with the oldest biographical accounts of their authors in the extensive series of Migne's 'Patrologiæ Cursus Completus.' This series is printed in double columns of the largest octavo, in volumes of from 1100 to 1500 pages, costing only about seven francs apiece. The whole works of Bede may be obtained in six such volumes. Aldhelm does not fill one. His works are in vol. lxxxix., together with the Letters of Boniface and letters and works of twenty-two other 8th century divines.

to another that he might continue his missionary work among the Frisian pagans, by whose hands he died in a tumult. He wrote letters in which a strong earnest mind, expressed in rough Latin, is devoted to the interests of the Papal see, and which contain valuable illustrations of his time. About a hundred of them are extant. There are ascribed to him also fifteen short Latin sermons, and (in Latin hexameters, with an introduction) nine Enigmas of the Virtues addressed to his sister. An extant life of St. Livinus is perhaps his, and he wrote a treatise, which is lost, on Unity of the Faith.

Bede was at work in his monastery, thirty-six years old, when Aldhelm died, and he was but three years younger than Boniface, being born in, or a few months before or after, the year 673. For he says at the end of his Ecclesiastical History, writing in 731, that he had "attained his fifty-ninth year." In the same place he further tells of himself that he was born in the territory of the monastery of Peter and Paul at Wearmouth and Jarrow, was given at seven years of age to be educated there by Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid, "and," he adds,

"Spending all the remaining time of my life in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture, and amidst the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing. In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and by order of the Abbot Ceolfrid, from which time till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for the use of me and mine, to compile out of the works of the venerable fathers, and to interpret and explain according to their meaning, these following pieces."

Here he adds the long list of his writings, and appends the final prayer to Jesus that he to whom it has been graciously granted to partake of the words of divine wisdom and knowledge, may in fit time come to the presence of Him who is the fountain of all knowledge. In that short sketch of his own life Bede has unconsciously given also a picture of his character.

The associated monasteries of St. Peter and St. Paul, at Wearmouth and Jarrow, were both founded in Bede's childhood. The ground on which they were erected, near the mouths of Tyne and Wear, had been granted by King

Ecgfrid—the first Northumbrian king under whom Deira and Bernicia were united in one monarchy—to the Abbot Benedict, who, under the lay name of Biscop, had been one of his thanes. This Anglo-Saxon noble was a man of cultivated intellect, and as Bede's first guide in life made his name famous in early literature. He travelled in pursuit of knowledge, and, having become a monk, still journeyed afar in search of writings and relics. He was the first who, for his building works, brought masons and glaziers across the channel. He went five times to Rome, and always brought back treasures for the enlarging body of the Wearmouth library, in which Bede lived as the working soul. Visits to Rome, as a fountain-head of piety and learning, were already so far in fashion, that many went with a light mood to succumb to the temptations of Italy. Already we hear the cry that afterwards came with so much vigour in the days of Ascham against the spells of the Italian Circe. Boniface said, in one of his letters, that of those travellers "few remain sound; for there are very few cities in Lombardy among the Franks or Gauls that do not contain an adulteress of English race." Among those who came from Rome with Benedict was the chief singer of St. Peter's at Rome, who, with Pope Agatha's permission, if not by his request, as teacher of the Gregorian chanting, and witness for Rome in England, settled for a time at Wearmouth, where he attracted many from great distances to the religious services. The noble Abbot Benedict set also to all the brethren in his monasteries an example of obedience to rule, himself taking his share of work in threshing and winnowing the corn, in duties of the bakehouse, kitchen and garden, and in giving milk to the lambs and calves.

The Wearmouth monastery of St. Peter's, on the north bank of the river Wear, was the only one built when Bede, at the age of seven, entered it. But when Bede <sup>Bede at Jarrow.</sup> was three years older, Abbot Benedict founded the other monastery of St. Paul at Jarrow, on the banks of the Tyne, about five miles distant from St. Peter's. Ceolfrid was appointed its first abbot, and young Bede was among those who removed to the Jarrow monastery, where he earned his name of Venerable. William of Malmesbury quotes a letter from Pope Sergius to Abbot Ceolfrid, asking that Bede might be sent to Rome; but Sergius

died in the following year,<sup>1</sup> and Bede who, it is said, declined to be raised to the dignity of an abbot, because "the office demands household care, and household care brings with it distraction of mind, which hinders the pursuit of learning," was not dragged to the Pope from his book-room.

The writings of Bede form a nearly complete encyclopædia of the knowledge of his day. Whatever he could learn from books his mind digested and reproduced in clear and simple Latin, with all the related facts and thoughts neatly arranged and harmonized. He wrote to teach, and with a healthy Anglo-Saxon mind went always by the plain way to his purpose. We have treatises from him of grammar, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, explanations of leap-year and of the equinox according to Anatolius, a large body of scripture commentary, histories of saints, and specially both in prose and heroic verse, the Life of Saint Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne. Cuthbert's memory was dear to the North of England men; for surely, apart from fables of his life, he was, among a rough people, an angelic missionary priest, with a deep sympathy for the neglected poor, whom he would seek in their most craggy and inaccessible homes, to dwell with them by the week or month, their bishop and their brother. Bede's book on Orthography is a short dictionary of certain Latin words, as to the right spelling or right sense of which he specially instructs the learner. "ABSCONDITUS, non *absconsus*." "ARBOR omne lignum dicitur, *Arbusta* non nisi fructifera." The writing of Latin verse being a common means of recreation or edification in the monasteries, we have from Bede also an ample treatise—'De Arte Metrica'—on Latin prosody. He applied also rhetoric to a study of Scripture in a short book on the figures of speech or Schemata (emphatic moulding of the order of words, without a change of sense), and Tropes (or words turned in emphatic speech from their natural sense), used in Scripture. These he classified and named after their kinds, according to the manner of the Greek and Latin rhetoricians, coming to the conclusion that the Scriptures use seventeen forms of figure of speech, and thirteen forms of trope.

<sup>1</sup> The letter is also described from Usher's MSS. by Wilkins, in 'Concil. Magn. Brit. et Hibern.' London, 1737. Vol. i. p. 63-4.

Into a book on the Nature of Things, that was the Anglo-Saxon text-book of science for many following generations, Bede condensed the knowledge of his day, as modified by religion, on the subject of the World and its Creation, the elements, the firmament and heavens, the five circles of the world (northern, solstitial, equinoctial, brumal, and austral), the four quarters of the heavens, the stars, the course and order of the planets, their apses, their changes of colour, the zodiac and its signs, the milky way, the sun, the moon, their courses and eclipses, comets, air, winds, thunder and lightning, the rainbow, clouds, showers, hail, snow, signs of the weather, pestilence, fresh and salt water, tides, the sea, the Red Sea, the Nile, the position of the earth, its form of a globe, its circle and dial shadows, its movement, volcanic *Ætna*, and the great geographical divisions of the earth. Each chapter is brief; and the diligent monk, originating nothing, gives only an enlightened digest of the knowledge of his day. His chapter on weather wisdom doubtless embodies the opinions of the seafaring Anglo-Saxons. It is as follows:—

*“ Signs of Storms or of Fine Weather.*

“ When the sun rises spotted or concealed with cloud, it presages a wet day; if red, a fine day; if pale, stormy; if it seem concave, so that bright in the middle it sends rays to the south and north, there will be moist and windy weather; when the sun sets pale in black clouds, it foretels wind from the north. Red sky at sunset signifies a fine day; at sunrise, a stormy day. Lightning from the north and thunder from the south-east portends tempest; south-wind, heat. If the moon in her quarter be golden red, it foreshows winds; if blackening with spots on her upper horn, it means a rainy month; if spotted in the middle, fine weather at the full. Also when in rowing at night the water sparkles on the oars, there will be storm. And when the dolphins often leap out of the water, from the direction towards which they are carried wind will rise; and in the part whence the clouds are dispersed they open the sky.”

Compare with this the speculative chapter

*“ On Lightning.*

“ Lightning is produced by the rubbing together of clouds, after the manner of flints struck together, the thunder occurring at the same time, but sound reaches the ears more slowly than light the eyes. For of all things the collision creates fire. Some say that while air draws water in vapour from the depths, it draws also fire heat-wise, and by their contact the horrid crash of thunder is produced; and if the fire conquer, it will be injurious to fruits; if water;



beneficial; but that the fire of lightning has so much the more penetrative power, from being made of subtler elements than that which is in use by us."

To this concise treatise on cosmography, Bede adds a shorter book—'De Temporibus'—on the Divisions of Time, beginning with day and night, week, month, year, &c., and passing by easy steps to a full explanation of the Paschal Cycle. His last six chapters arrange the heads of civil history in six divisions, which were recognized as the Six Ages of the World. This book is the skeleton or elementary introduction to a more advanced treatise of considerable length—'De Temporum Ratione'—on the Theory of Astronomical Times and Seasons, which is a digest of the higher astronomical knowledge of the day, leading up to the best attainable understanding of the astronomical basis of the calendar, of the Paschal Cycle of nineteen years, and all that related to the Roman rule concerning Easter. This treatise also ends with a summary of the chief historical events in each of the six ages of the world; but the summary is enlarged into a digest of sacred history, and of profane history, so far as it was memorable for its connexion with the rise and spread of Christianity. There is added to this historical sketch a chapter showing the three opinions of the faithful as to the time of the Lord's coming; it ends with the wise sentence that "he errs in none, who affirms or denies none." This is followed by chapters upon the times of Antichrist, the Day of Judgment, and upon the Seventh and Eighth Ages to come—the seventh being man's Sabbath age of rest in the grave; the eighth that which shall begin on the day of resurrection.

Attrition of Rome-bred doctrine with the eastern usages, to which the British church still clung, produced much thunder. There was thunder out of the south, and lightning from the east, with storm in plenty; and monastic zeal in the teaching of astronomy was quickened and warmed by the determination of the clergy of the Roman school to preach down and teach down the British heresy concerning times for celebrating Easter. What Bede taught in a short treatise dogmatically, and in a long treatise theoretically, he reduced also to a catechism—'De Ratione Computi'—for the use of pupils in the monastery school. He wrote also, as a separate treatise, a long letter on

the celebration of Easter, and a narrative of the way in which Pope Victor, having committed to Theophilus, Bishop of Caesarea and Palestine, the charge of settling, by help of a synod, the one right way of keeping this great period of fast and festival, (customs before then differing), the bishops opened the arguments by declaring that nothing could be settled unless they began at the beginning. Bede then shows by what questions and answers they proved out of Scripture that this world began at the vernal equinox, or on the 21st of March, the moon then being full—one of two “great lights.” It was in spring, because it is said the earth brought forth grass; it was equinox, because light was said to have been divided equally from darkness. Also the first day of the world was a Sunday, and the day of our Lord’s resurrection was a Sunday, because it is written of it, “this is the day that the Lord hath made;” and therefore Easter day can only be kept on Sunday. I need show no more of the nature of the arguments.

In addition to these educational works, there are ascribed Bede, on authority of various degrees of weight, other books, ‘on astronomical and Paschal computation; upon grammar from Donatus; rhetoric; arithmetic; speech by the fingers; theoretical music; practical music; horology; phlebotomy; elements of philosophy; languages of nations; philosophical axioms, from Aristotle; the Seven Miracles of the world; proverbs and prognostics.

But this was incidental work. The utmost labour of Bede was spent in diligent collection and digestion of all that seemed to him to have been wisely said by the interpreters of Scripture. His “Four Books on the beginning of Genesis to the birth of Isaac and election of Ishmael,” were begun, he says, at the request of Acca, Bishop of Hexham, for the purpose of bringing into a volume, of which the transcription would not be too costly for all but the rich, the information diffused through the nine books, (including six of the Days of Creation, called a ‘Hexa(omer)on’) by Basil the Great, Latinized by Eustathius; the six books of the Hexameron of Ambrose of Milan; and the twelve books of Augustine of Hippo, besides the two that he wrote against the Manichæans. To such condensation of the knowledge scattered over many costly MSS. into compendious treatises,

that might be copied and recopied at reasonable cost, and that would make the pith of sound doctrine easily attainable by many, Bede gave his utmost energy. He had a clear mind wherewith to apprehend, arrange, and sift the best truth he could find in unlocking the word-hoard of costly books that Abbot Benedict brought to the Wearmouth library. Of the Four Books upon Genesis, he says that he sought matter for them not only in the volumes especially pointed out to him, but in other writings of the same and other fathers; so that he gives the general mind of the fathers on that part of Scripture. "Now," he says, "in their own words; now for brevity's sake in mine;" his commission having been, "from the delightful plains of a wide flowering paradise to pluck what might seem sufficient for the needs of the infirm." Bede also completed a large body of 'Commentaries upon the Pentateuch,' nearly half of them being devoted to Genesis. This was a work in three books expounding facts, and figurative spiritual interpretation of the facts, related concerning "The Tabernacle and its vessels, and the garments of the priests." There is also a similar interpretation of the Temple of Solomon, in which the windows, for example, are the holy teachers through whom enters the light of Heaven, and in which the cedar is the incorruptible beauty of the virtues. Bede wrote also six books of a spiritual interpretation, chapter by chapter, of "Allegorical Exposition of the Book of the Prophet Samuel;" and a book answering thirty questions, arising out of the Books of Kings, which had been submitted to Bede by Northelm, a brother priest. Still delighting to interpret facts of scripture history into spiritual allegory, and showing often in this labour of compilation and invention a more charming poetical sense than readers might expect to find in the exegetical works of an old Anglo-Saxon priest, Bede wrote also by way of allegorical exposition, three books on Esdras and Nehemiah, three on the Proverbs of Solomon, six upon Solomon's Song, one on the Song of Habakkuk. These are his undoubted works on the Old Testament. There are also ascribed to him, a short collection of opinions of the fathers on the six days of creation; a book of instruction in Genesis, a dialogue between master and pupil; shorter books of questions on the other volumes of the Pentateuch, Joshua, Judges, Ruth,

the Books of Kings, and a commentary on the Psalms, with lesser writings.

Of study of the New Testament we have as the undoubted work of Bede, a full and devout critical and moral exposition of each of the four gospels; four books upon the Gospel of St. Matthew, four upon that of St. Mark, six upon that of St. Luke, and an almost equally long exposition, not technically divided into books, of the Gospel according to St. John. This work also was done at the request of, and dedicated to, Bishop Acca.

Acca was a follower of Wilfrid, whom he succeeded in or about the year 709 as Bishop of Hexham. He was employing all the powers of his mind, and spending all his means, on the architectural adornment of his church of St. Andrew, and on the supply to it of an ample library, besides relics, rich vases for incense, and twelve years' instruction in church music from Maban, an Italian vocalist; but Acca himself is said to have been "a heavenly singer."

Acca still urging Bede in frequent letters "not to permit the edge of his mind to become rusty or dull by inert ease, but to be vigilant and unwearied in daily study of the Scripture,"<sup>1</sup> encouraged him also to a written study of the Acts of the Apostles. A Preface to the Seven Canonical Epistles, and expositions of the Epistles of James, Peter, and John, with three books of an "Explanation of the Apocalypse," complete Bede's exegetical works. But we have forty-nine authentic sermons of his in two books, and a hundred and nine more that are ascribed to him; besides a metrical life of St. Cuthbert, Bishop of Lindisfarne, in forty-seven chapters of hexameters; and in Latin hexameter also the Passion of Justin Martyr, a short "Poetical Martyrology," arranged by months, three hymns celebrating God in Nature, and one in the short lines which so readily fell into rhyme. In those short lines there are nine hymns, to be sung to the native measures on important saints' days; and although none are intentionally rhymed, they show how the uniform inflexional endings made the early suggestion of rhyme

<sup>1</sup> "Accepi creberrimas beatitudinis tuæ litteras, quibus me commovere dignatus es ne mentis acumen inertis otio torpere et obdormire permittam." *Ad Accam Bedæ Epist. in Expos. Act. Apost.*

inevitable.<sup>1</sup> We have also from Bede's hand Latin metrical psalms, one of them in short lines with rhyme; and in prose, a few pure strains of prayer and praise. To all this evidence of his activity of mind there are still to be added his lives of the five first abbots of his own twin monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow—Benedict, Ceolfrid, Easteruin, Sigfrid, and Husetberct; a prose life of St. Cuthbert; a short life of St. Felix; a full prose Martyrology, and his '*Ecclesiastical History*.'

Bede's '*Ecclesiastical History of England*' tells the Political History of the country when its soul lay in the diffusion of Christianity, and the relations of a missionary clergy to the chiefs of independent provinces. As seen from the religious side, which alone had strong interest for a body of scholars who were all vowed to the direct service of God, history, like science and arithmetic, would have been studied and taught in the monasteries as an ecclesiastical matter, if the fact that there was no literature—no working national mind—outside the church, had not made it inevitable that an ecclesiastical history should at that time contain all the essentials of the story of the nation. What Bede wrote was the History of England as far as it was in his time known and understood by the best men in England.

The work is addressed to the Ceolwulf who was King of Northumberland when Bede completed it, and the date with which it ends is 731. It begins with a brief general account of Britain and British history before the arrival of Augustine. This is derived mainly from Pliny, Solinus, Orosius, Eutropius, and Gildas; there is a citation of St. Basil, and there are some additions and corrections derived from current tradition or information given to Bede by Abbot Albinus, a pupil at Canterbury of Theodore and Adrian; and by Northelm, a priest of London, afterwards, in 736, Archbishop of Canterbury. It was chiefly

<sup>1</sup> That on St. Agnes' day begins, for example :

" Illuxit alma sæculis  
Dies beata virginis,  
Quæ morte victa perpetis  
Vitæ recepit gaudia.  
Intravit Agnes auream  
Poli triumphans regiam," &c.

Albinus who encouraged Bede to undertake the work, and he was of all helpers the most indefatigable. When Northelm went on church affairs of his own to Rome, he used that opportunity of making search in Bede's behalf among the archives of St. Peter's, bringing back for his friend copies of letters by Gregory the Great and other popes relating to the church history of Britain, and these letters are included in Bede's work. Such helpers, strong partisans of Rome, supplied not only the details concerning bishops and kings of the West Saxons, aided, as regarded the West Saxons, by Daniel, bishop of that province, but they gave also the general Roman account of British ecclesiastical history, which, of course, ascribed the merit of the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to the Roman Pope Gregory and the Roman Augustine, taking but slight notice of the previous energetic labours of the native British church. Of the piety of Cedd and Chad, who were the most effective missionaries of the Mercians, and were inspired not from Rome, but from Iona, Bede nevertheless tells, from records and traditions known to the Abbot Esius, of Lindesey (now a part of Lincolnshire), or learnt from Bishop Cunebert of Sidnacester, now Lincoln, "or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit." But what was done in the church throughout the province of the Northumbrians—that is to say, in his own district, he tells us, "from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not from any particular author, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same, besides what I had of my own knowledge." And he adds of Cuthbert, the credit of whose labours was certainly not due to the Pope of Rome, "that what I have written concerning our most holy father, Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume, or in my treatise on his life and actions, I partly took, and faithfully copied from what I found written of him by the brethren of the church of Lindisfarne, but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of such as knew him." To this satisfactory citation of the authorities on which, with pure regard for truth, and in sympathy with all good men, he rested the first great historical work in our literature, the faithful scholar adds his humble

entreaty to the reader, "that if he shall in this that we have written find anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not impute the same to me, who, as the true rule of history requires, have laboured sincerely to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity." The best charm of the work is, in fact, its sincerity. Himself attached to the Roman see, and humbly admitting all its claims, Bede gives to Gregory and Augustine the place claimed for them by Rome, and too easily since conceded to them by English writers; but nobody has shown more clearly in honest detail how much of the noblest missionary work is to be traced to Iona and Lindisfarne. Even Cædmon at Whitby was in a monastery that owed nothing to Rome, and that was opposed to the determination of the Roman see, to crush into conformity with its own discipline the wholesome native missionary church. Bede distinguished also in his history between the value of testimony; stating when his informant was an eyewitness, when, as in relating miracles which it was not then unreasonable to credit, he repeated common report of many tongues.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The best edition of Bede's History is that, founded on a careful collation of MSS., published in 1838, for the Historical Society, by Joseph Stevenson. A MS. of Bede's History, formerly belonging to More, Bishop of Ely, is in the public library at Cambridge (Kk. 5, 16). Other MSS. are in the Brit. Mus. Cotton Tib. C. II.; Tib. A. XIV. Harleian 4978. King's MS. 13 C. V. The work was first translated into English by Thomas Stapleton, student in divinity (Antwerp, 1565), with a dedication to Queen Elizabeth. In this country the first edition of the text was the folio published at Cambridge in 1643-4, by Abraham Wheloc, who gave in an appendix the Anglo-Saxon translation by King Alfred the Great. Abraham Wheloc, Professor of Arabic, had then held for about three years, as first lecturer, the first Anglo-Saxon lectureship established in this country. It was founded at Cambridge, in 1640, by Sir Henry Spelman, then eighty years old, who appropriated part of his own annual income and the vicarage of Middleton, in the diocese of Norwich, augmented by himself, as a stipend either for the reading of Anglo-Saxon lectures or publication of curious Anglo-Saxon MSS. Wheloc preferred private study, and began with this issue of Bede. Sir Henry Spelman's son, Sir John, wrote a Life of King Alfred. Sir John dying soon after his father, upon the death of Wheloc, who had been recommended to Sir Henry Spelman by Archbishop Usher, Clement Spelman named the Rev. Samuel Foster as successor. But Archbishop Usher so strongly urged the claims of William Somner, then engaged upon his Saxon dictionary, that Mr. Foster had the living; Mr. Somner the lecturer's stipend; but the

Bede survived only for about three years the completion of his history. It may have been as a consequence of close book-work, insufficiently sustained by daily exercise, that Bede "suffered in his stomach, and drew his breath with pains and sighs."<sup>1</sup> Whatever his ailment was, he died of it on one spring day in the year 735; and of the manner of his death we have a touching and most characteristic account in a letter written while the grief of it was fresh, by one of his pupils to another.

*"Cuthbert's Letter on the Death of Venerable Bede."*

"To his fellow-reader Cuthwin, beloved in Christ, Cuthbert, his school-fellow; health for ever in the Lord. I have received with much pleasure the small present which you sent me, and with much satisfaction read the letters of your devout erudition; wherein I found that masses and holy prayers are diligently celebrated by you for our father and master, Bede, whom God loved: this was what I principally desired, and therefore it is more pleasing, for the love of him (according to my capacity), in a few words to relate in what manner he departed this world, understanding that you also desire and ask the same. He was much troubled with shortness of breath, yet without pain, before the day of our Lord's resurrection, that is, about a fortnight; and thus he afterwards passed his life, cheerful and rejoicing, giving thanks to Almighty God every day and night, nay, every hour, till the day of our Lord's ascension, that is, the seventh before the kalends of June [twenty-sixth of May], and daily read lessons to us his disciples, and whatever remained of the day, he spent in singing psalms; he also passed all the night awake, in joy and thanksgiving, unless a short sleep prevented it; in which case he no sooner awoke than he presently repeated his wonted exercises, and ceased not to give thanks to God with uplifted hands. I declare with truth, that I have never seen with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, any man so earnest in giving thanks to the living God.

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pay of the lectureship was probably so much reduced by the partition, that it was not offered to another. In 1659, one year before the Restoration, Somner published his Saxon dictionary; and in the dedication to Roger Spelman, Esq., grandson of Sir Henry, expressly mentions his having succeeded to the annual stipend which Professor Wheloc enjoyed till his death.

This Cambridge lectureship having fallen into abeyance, the Anglo-Saxon professorship, now so worthily filled by the Rev. Dr. Bosworth, author of what is now the standard Anglo-Saxon and English Dictionary, was founded, in 1752, by the will of Dr. Richard Rawlinson, F.R.S., F.S.A.; who gave rents in Lancashire for its endowment, but hampered his gift with various petty restrictions on its usefulness. He left estates to the Society of Antiquaries on conditions, which they rejected. From an inaugural lecture delivered in 1807 by the Rev. James Ingram, who was then A. S. Professor at Oxford, I take these notes of the only serious attempts hitherto made to establish some knowledge of Anglo-Saxon as a fit part of the education of an English gentleman.

<sup>1</sup> Will. of Malmesbury, lib. i. c. 2.



"O truly happy man! He chanted the sentence of St. Paul the Apostle, 'It is dreadful to fall into the hands of the living God,' and much more out of Holy Writ; wherein also he admonished us to think of our last hour, and to shake off the sleep of the soul; and being learned in our poetry, he said some things also in our tongue, for he said, putting the same into English,

"For tham need-fere  
 Nenig wyrtheth  
 Thances snotttra  
 Thonne him thearf sy  
 To gehigene

Ær his heonen-gange  
 Hwet his gaste  
 Godes oththe yveles  
 Æfter deathe heonen  
 Demed wurthe."

which means this :—

"No man is wiser than is requisite, before the necessary departure; that is, to consider, before the soul departs hence, what good or evil it hath done, and how it is to be judged after its departure."

"He also sang antiphons according to our custom and his own, one of which is, 'O glorious King, Lord of all power, who, triumphing this day, didst ascend above all the heavens; do not forsake us orphans; but send down upon us the Spirit of truth which was promised to us by the Father. Hallelujah!' And when he came to that word, 'do not forsake us,' he burst into tears, and wept much, and an hour after he began to repeat what he had commenced, and we, hearing it, mourned with him. By turns we read, and by turns we wept, nay, we wept always whilst we read. In such joy we passed the days of Lent, till the aforesaid day; and he rejoiced much, and gave God thanks, because he had been thought worthy to be so weakened. He often repeated, 'That God scourgeth every son whom he receiveth;' and much more out of Holy Scripture; as also this sentence from St. Ambrose, 'I have not lived so as to be ashamed to live among you; nor do I fear to die, because we have a gracious God.' During these days he laboured to compose two works well worthy to be remembered, besides the lessons we had from him, and singing of Psalms; viz., he translated the Gospel of St. John as far as the words: 'But what are these among so many,' etc. [St. John, vi. 9] into our own tongue, for the benefit of the church; and some collections out of the Book of Notes of bishop Isidorus, saying: 'I will not have my pupils read a falsehood, nor labour therein without profit after my death.' When the Tuesday before the ascension of our Lord came, he began to suffer still more in his breath, and a small swelling appeared in his feet; but he passed all that day and dictated cheerfully, and now and then among other things, said, 'Go on quickly, I know not how long I shall hold out, and whether my Maker will not soon take me away.' But to us he seemed very well to know the time of his departure; and so he spent the night, awake, in thanksgiving; and when the morning appeared, that is, Wednesday, he ordered us to write with all speed what he had begun; and this done, we walked till the third hour with the relics of saints, according to the custom of that day. There was one of us with him, who said to him, 'Most dear master, there is still one chapter wanting: do you think it troublesome to be asked any more questions?' He answered, 'It is no trouble. Take your pen, and make ready, and write fast.' Which he did, but at the ninth hour he said to me, 'I have some little articles of value in my chest, such as pepper, papkins, and incense: run quickly, and bring the priests of our monastery to me, that I may distribute

among them the gifts which God has bestowed on me. The rich in this world are bent on giving gold and silver and other precious things. But I, in charity, will joyfully give my brothers what God has given unto me.' He spoke to every one of them, admonishing and entreating them that they would carefully say masses and prayers for him, which they readily promised; but they all mourned and wept, especially because he said, 'They should no more see his face in this world.' They rejoiced for that he said, 'It is time that I return to Him who formed me out of nothing: I have lived long; my merciful Judge well foresaw my life for me; the time of my dissolution draws nigh; for I desire to die and to be with Christ.' Having said much more, he passed the day joyfully till the evening; and the boy, above mentioned, said: 'Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written.' He answered, 'Write quickly.' Soon after, the boy said, 'The sentence is now written.' He replied, 'It is well; you have said the truth. It is ended. Receive my head into your hands, for it is a great satisfaction to me to sit facing my holy place, where I was wont to pray, that I may also sitting call upon my Father.' And thus on the pavement of his little cell, singing: 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,' when he had named the Holy Ghost, he breathed his last, and so departed to the heavenly kingdom. All who were present at the death of the blessed father, said they had never seen any other person expire with so much devotion, and in so tranquil a frame of mind. For as you have heard, so long as the soul animated his body, he never ceased to give thanks to the true and living God, with expanded hands exclaiming: 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost!' with other spiritual ejaculations. But know this, dearest brother, that I could say much concerning him, if my want of learning did not cut short my discourse. Nevertheless, by the grace of God, I purpose shortly to write more concerning him, particularly of those things which I saw with my own eyes, and heard with my own ears."<sup>1</sup>

Bede was buried under the church porch and afterwards within the church at Jarrow. There Elfred, a priest of Durham, prayed at his tomb on every anniversary of his death. But on one of these occasions<sup>2</sup> Elfred went to Jarrow as usual, and, having spent some days alone in the church praying and watching, he returned alone to Durham in the early morning, and he never again visited Jarrow. A few silent monks in Durham learnt from him that he had stolen the bones of Venerable Bede and laid them in their own church side by side with those of

<sup>1</sup> The letter is in Asser's Annals, Simeon of Durham, and elsewhere. I quote from the volume in Bohn's Antiquarian Library which contains translations both of Bede's Ecclesiastical History and of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, with an Introduction, edited by Dr. Giles. By this volume Bede's History is made easily accessible to every English reader.

<sup>2</sup> The story is told by Simeon of Durham.

the holy Cuthbert. When it was no longer possible that they should be reclaimed by Jarrow, these relics were employed as a source of income, and in the middle of the twelfth century Hugh Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, built over them a beautiful shrine of gold, silver, and jewels.

Of the well known line closing the inscription to Bede's memory in Durham cathedral, where his bones lay till, in the days of Henry VIII., their rich shrine was broken, and the bones themselves were scattered by the mob, there is a legend that might well be true if angels visibly took part in the affairs of men. A pupil who had been chosen to write his master's epitaph laboured in vain to complete the hexameter line, in which he was to record that "In this grave are the bones of Bede." He fell asleep over his toil at the unfinished line

"Hac sunt in fossa, Bedæ

But an angel bent over the sleeping youth, and with a pencil of light supplied the missing word. The student awoke and read "Hac sunt in fossa, Bedæ Venerabilis ossa." England has ratified the title, and to the end of time his countrymen will look back with affectionate honour to the *sinless student life* of Venerable Bede.

## CHAPTER X.

THE lines of Anglo-Saxon verse quoted in the letter of Bede's pupil Cuthbert,<sup>1</sup> as from the lips of his dying master, are in Anglo-Saxon of a form differing from that of <sup>Anglo-Saxon of Northumbria.</sup> the extant MSS. of the chief remains of Anglo-Saxon literature. But that provincial form, employed at Jarrow, could scarcely have been other than the Northumbrian, although it is not the dialect in which the poem of the Northumbrian Cædmon has come down to us.

Among the remains of the Northumbrian or Anglian Saxon is the Runic writing combined with sculpture from <sup>The Ruthwell cross.</sup> sacred subjects and Latin inscriptions upon the stone obelisk at Ruthwell, on the Scottish border—an obelisk or cross that was flung down by the Presbyterians in 1642, and had part of its writing then effaced. The Ruthwell runes had been misread by Repp and Professor Finn Magnusen as half Danish or as some perfectly new language, and they were first rightly interpreted by Mr. John Mitchell Kemble in a paper read to the London Society of Antiquaries on Anglo-Saxon Runes,<sup>2</sup> as an inscription in the English of Northumbreland during the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries. Mr. Kemble then pointed out that they set forth a few couplets of a religious poem on the events sculptured in the two principal compartments of the stone, namely, the washing of our Saviour's feet by Mary Magdalene, and the glorification of Christ through his Passion. The correctness of his interpretation was afterwards proved by the discovery of lines similar to those read by him in one of the poems of the Vercelli Book.<sup>3</sup>

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The MS. at St. Gall, containing Cuthbert's letter and these lines, is itself considered by Mr. Kemble to be as old as the first half of the 8th century.

<sup>1</sup> 'Archæologia,' vol. xxviii. (1840), pp. 349-359.

<sup>2</sup> The Dream of the Holy Rood. See 'Archæologia,' vol. xxx. (1844), pp. 31-39.

There is also a Northumbrian fragment of Cædmon from one of the most ancient copies of Alfred's 'Bede,' printed in Wanley's Catalogue. The Anglo-Saxon Ritual belonging to the Cathedral Church of Durham, called by tradition the Ritual of King Aldfrid, edited for the Surtees Society by the Rev. Joseph Stevenson in 1840,<sup>1</sup> supplies a fuller illustration of the early language of Northumbria, in an interlinear version, made about the year 970, of the greater part of its Latin text into the common speech of the district. The Durham Gospels, too, known as St. Cuthbert's or the Durham Book,<sup>2</sup> belonging to the close of the seventh century, have Northumbrian Saxon glosses of the age of those of the Ritual upon their Latin text. The Northumbrian of the Ritual and the Durham Book belong to a period more than a century and a half later than the irruption of the Danes—an event by which language was perceptibly affected.

An ancient Psalter written entirely in Roman capitals<sup>3</sup> has glosses written at a much earlier stage of the Norse rule, and giving therefore the North Anglian dialect in a purer state.<sup>4</sup>

After the Danes had desolated monasteries, and checked for a time the advance of mind in the North of England, it was among the West Saxons that King Alfred re-established a regard for letters. The monuments of Anglo-Saxon literature thus transferred from the North to the South were then and afterwards re-copied into the dialect of the South for Southern reading. Thus we have Beowulf, in

<sup>1</sup> This MS. is a small folio, 6½ inches high by 4½ broad, written on 88 leaves of thick parchment, 23 lines to a page. It wants the first leaves containing the services from the Nativity to the Epiphany, has other leaves missing, and what were the blank leaves at its end—partly made blank by erasure—have been filled with miscellaneous entries of hymns, exorcism, tables of contraction used in civil law, &c. Some parts of the MS. are also defaced by use, time, and damp, and some of its Latin is so incorrectly written as to be unintelligible.

<sup>2</sup> Brit. Mus. Cott., Nero, D. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Brit. Mus. Cott., Vespasian, A. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Valuable papers on the North Anglian Dialect, by Mr. John Mitchell Kemble, are in the 'Proceedings of the Philological Society,' vol. ii. (1846), pp. 119-128, 131-142.

the one remaining copy, only as that poem was written and read by men of Kent; and the one copy of *Cædmon*, too, comes down to us in what accident has thus made the literary dialect of Anglo-Saxon. We get the mind of the North through the tongue of the South, and only a few traces are left from which to argue of the difference of speech—not so great as occurs sometimes in the Frisian Islands\* between two neighbouring Frisian dialects—between West Saxon and East Anglian.

It is also during these days of monastic influence on cultivated English that we find the teachers of religion not only sole masters and creators of the literature, sole representatives of the best mind of England—the records of their life and influence are everywhere sinking deep into the language also. Their most familiar Latin blends with the familiar English of their neighbours, and its adopted words, rubbed down and smoothed by long use, are distinguished technically as Latin of the Second Period from the half-dozen words obtained through the Roman occupation in the first instance, and from the Latin of the Third Period that came through Norman French. A suggestive part of it is Greek. By the Eastern church the first monasteries were built; Greek, therefore, and not Latin, is the source of such words as hermit (*ἐρημίτης* from *ἐρημος*, desert), anchorite (*ἀναχωρητής*, a withdrawer), monk (*μοναχός*, solitary), monastery, minster (*μοναστήριον*, solitude), cœnobite (*κοινὸς βίος*, life in common), ascetic (*ἀσκητικός*, with exercise or discipline), abbot, abbey (from the Syriac, *abba*, father), alms (*ἐλεημοσύνη* from *ἔλεος*, pity). The father of monasticism was Anthony the Coptic hermit; Athanasius, his disciple, was its sponsor in the West. But the East held its pre-eminence. The West has never had a Simeon Stylites.<sup>1</sup>

But our Greek-English of the monasteries came through the Latin, and is really a part of that “Latin of the Second Period,” which gave to the English language through the Church such words as porch (*porticus*), cloister (*claustrum*),

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Lectures on the History of the Eastern Church, with an Introduction on the Study of Ecclesiastical History, by Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, D.D., Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the University of Oxford, and Canon of Christchurch.’ London, 1861. I have used in the text a few of Dr. Stanley’s words.

saint (*sanctus*), bishop (*episcopus*), archbishop (*archiepiscopus*), mass (*missa*), candle (*candela*), psalter (*psalterium*), epistle (*epistola*), provost (*præpositus*), pall (*pallium*), chalice (*calix*), to preach (*prædicare*), to prove (*probare*); and such names of foreign animals, plants, &c., as lion (*leo*), camel (*camelus*), elephant (*elephas*), fig (*figus*), feverfew (*febrifugia*), parsley (*petroselinum*), pepper (*piper*), purple (*purpura*), pumice-stone (*pumex*), &c.<sup>1</sup>

The language itself then felt the influence of that universal use of Latin in the Literature of which we now resume the story. Egbert, Archbishop of York, was placed as a child in the monastery of Hexham, under Bishop Eata, who died A.D. 685. He received deacon's orders at Rome, and became Archbishop of York in the year 732. Two years afterwards Bede addressed to him an interesting letter on the duties of his office. He should avoid festivity and avarice, endeavouring to check the increasing negligence of the Northumbrian clergy, and the corruption of morals in the monasteries, with special discouragement of the "wicked custom"—become general in Northumbria during the previous thirty years—of the foundation and endowment of monasteries by earls as places of retirement for themselves and their wives, so that they were at once abbots and earls or attendants on the king. Supported by the influence of Bede's letter, Egbert worked in the way indicated, and he founded a good school at York, wherein he had Alcuin for a pupil. Egbert wrote a dialogue on the "Ecclesiastical Institution;" published excerpts from the older canons of the Church, and composed the "Confessionale" and "Pœnitentiale," showing grounds of advice in confession, and the penances to be imposed; as, that if a monk were sick through drunkenness, he should fast thirty days. These were written both in Anglo-Saxon and in Latin, and were afterwards standard authorities in the Anglo-Saxon Church.

Alcuin, to whom Charlemagne looked for instruction, often used a Latinised form of his name, as Albinus, and signed himself also Flaccus, in letters to his friends—sometimes as

<sup>1</sup> This list is from Mr. Edwin Guest's 'English Rhythms,' vol. ii., pp. 108, 109.

Flaccus Albinus, sometimes as Albinus Flaccus. "Often," he says, in a letter to the nun Gundrad, whom he is calling <sup>Alcuin.</sup> Eulalia, "familiarity is apt to cause a change of name; as Our Lord himself changed Simon into Peter, and called the sons of Zebedee the Sons of Thunder; as you may see in ancient and in these our latest days."<sup>1</sup> Nothing is known with certainty of Alcuin's parentage. George Buchanan<sup>2</sup> judged, by his possible assumption of the name Albinus from a home in Alban, that he was a Scotchman. But Alcuin himself writes to the monks of York,<sup>3</sup> "You cherished, as with maternal affection, the frail years of my infancy, and sustained with pious patience the time of the lusts of youth, and, by the discipline of fatherly castigation, brought me up to the perfect age of manhood." Scripture was then misread into an ordinance of severity in education; and Aldhelm, according to the spirit of his time, which remained unaltered for centuries, had transposed in one of his proverbs the text, "Whom He loves he chastens," into "If a father loves his child, he thrashes him."

In the religious community at York, Alcuin, either as orphan or dedicated infant, found from his infancy father and mother. He was child of the monastery, trained in it when Egbert and Albert ruled. Egbert became archbishop three years before the death of Bede, and, as he ruled thirty-four years before Albert succeeded him, the date of the death of Bede—735—is sometimes given as a probable date of the birth of Alcuin. Alcuin was carefully trained for the Church in the monastery school, where Archbishop Egbert himself expounded the New Testament; while his relation Albert explained the Old Testament, and taught also Latin and science. Of Albert, Alcuin records that he sought to attach to himself and to the monastery whatever youths he saw to possess good natural ability.<sup>4</sup>

When Albert went the way of all Church scholars, to Rome,

<sup>1</sup> Alcuin, Ep. 125 (anno 800). Alcuin's works are contained in two volumes Migne's 'Patrologia,' and references here given are to this edition.

<sup>2</sup> 'Hist.' lib. v.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. 6, ad Fratres Eboracensis Ecclesiæ.

<sup>4</sup> "Indolis egregiæ juvenes quoscunque videbat,  
Hos sibi conjunxit, docuit, nutrit, amavit."



in search of literature and other means of strength to the Church, Alcuin, as a young monk of high promise, was his companion. "When as a youth," he says in a letter to Charlemagne, "I went to Rome, I spent some days in Pavia, a royal city, where a certain Jew named Julius, held disputation with that Master Peter who shone at your Court as a teacher of grammar."<sup>1</sup>

After that first visit to Rome Alcuin remained with the community at York, learning and teaching, till the death of Egbert, in 766. Albert, then raised to the Archbishopric, consecrated Alcuin deacon, and transferred to him the care over the school and library. On the library committed to his charge he wrote in Latin verse:—

"Small is the space which contains the gifts of heavenly Wisdom,  
Which you, reader, rejoice piously here to receive;  
Better than richest gifts of the Kings, this treasure of Wisdom,  
Light, for the seeker of this, shines on the road to the Day."

In one of his larger poems Alcuin celebrates the contents of the library so carefully collected. It contained MSS. of the Latin and Greek Fathers, as well as some Hebrew. There were, he says, the works of Jerome, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustin, Athanasius, Orosius, Gregory the Great, Pope Leo, Basil, Fulgentius, Cassiodorus, Chrysostom, John, Lactantius, Aldhelm, Bede, Victorinus, Boethius, Sedulius, Juvencus, Clemens, Prosper, Paulinus, Arator; of the old classical writers, Pompeius, Pliny, Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Statius, Lucan, and Auctor; of grammarians and teachers, Probus and Focas, Donatus, Priscian, Servius, Euticius, Pompeius, Commianus. Having celebrated these, he adds that there were very many more of whose names the recital would be too long for his verse. Alcuin, as the librarian and teacher in the school, drew knowledge from the books, and poured it orally among the pupils. With some of his old pupils at York, Alcuin in his later days of high prosperity maintained a correspondence.

But after the death of Albert, in 780, Alcuin's friend and pupil Eanbald was raised to the see, and he gratified Alcuin by sending him to Rome for the Archbishop's pall, and for what

addition to his *Klary* he could take that opportunity of finding. Now Charlemagne, who had been busy at Rome—having his youngest son, Louis le Débonnaire, crowned King of Aquitaine, and his second son, Pepin, crowned King of Lombardy—came, on his return, through Parma, while Alcuin was staying in that city. It was two years after Charlemagne, victorious against the Saracens in Spain, had suffered on his return across the Pyrenees, defeat of his rear guard by the Basques, at the Pass of Roncesvalles, where fell Count Roland of Brittany, hero of many legends. The unknown author of a life of Alcuin written not long after his death, from information given by his friend and pupil Sigulf, says that “Charlemagne knew Alcuin, who had formerly been sent to him by his master on some mission.”<sup>1</sup> Charlemagne, finding Alcuin at Parma, desired to engage him as a teacher of his children, and a sort of Minister of Public Education in his empire. Alcuin accepted the offer, and, having returned to York for the permission of his superior, he went in the year 782 to Charlemagne’s Court, taking some of his pupils with him, among whom were Wizo, named Candidus; Fredegisus, named Nathaniel; and Sigulf, as assistants.

At the death of Bede the Anglo-Saxon Church yielded the best practical scholarship in Christendom. The instrument was valued only for its use, and the Latin style of English scholars, that was as good as that of their neighbours in the days of Bede and Alcuin, afterwards greatly degenerated, for wild Danes overran the land, and after that, among earnest men, the habit grew of speaking in their own tongue to the people. By the monasteries, too, relaxed in discipline or reformed with cramping strictness, the best part of their use was after Alcuin’s time already fulfilled, and the time was advancing rapidly when they could no longer represent the best intellect of England. In the days of Anglo-Saxon scholarship. though learned men might

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<sup>1</sup>His life, in fifteen short chapters, was first edited by Andreas Quercetan (André du Chesne of Tours), in 1617, from the old MS. at Rheims. It professes to have been written when Aldric was abbot of Ferrara, i. e., before the year 829. The writer says that he had his information from his teacher Sigulf, who was Alcuin’s pupil; and Sigulf was the abbot who preceded Aldric in the monastery at Ferrara. The memoir forms part of the prefatory matter

travel from England to Rome in search of lore, that quiet, humble, busy monk in the small book-room at Jarrow was spoken of throughout Western Christendom, and was the most famous man in the church. Elsewhere there were Chrodoberts and Jonases, and the Popes themselves were yielding a Donus and an Agatho, a Leo II., and an Adrian I. Deacon Paul Wilfrid was a credit to the Lombards. Toledo had its Hilde-  
fonsus upholding the perpetual virginity of St. Mary, had also its Julian, Idalius, Felix, and Elipandus, causer of much strife, but English Bede had not his equal. Then while the fame of Bede was fresh, the fame of Alcuin rose; and in him there was

Alcuin and  
Charlemagne.

one more representative of the soundest, the most practical, expression of the spirit of the Latin Church. Charlemagne also was strong in his own form of practical Latinity. A soldier and statesman, with a very keen sense of the real, and a desire to turn learning and all other good things to substantial account, he appropriated to himself in his own way the genius of the Roman laws and customs, and wrote in his own Roman text those diplomatic works upon the lands of Europe which we find also as they were written in ink for him by his secretaries. He seized in his own rugged way of military statesmanship on Latin Christianity, and was resolved to cut and carve the Pagan Saxons into images of Christians. With a working mind of restless energy he lost no time, but spent his summers in war, and his winters at home, inquiring, planning, learning all that it seemed useful to know, drilling also his family, marrying a new wife when the old was sentenced to divorce—he had nine wives, of whom three died in his lifetime—and forbidding marriage to his daughters. He was ready to conquer and transplant either men or pot-herbs. Many a hill side and country garden smiles yet with the vines and mulberries he planted, and valuing also the tree of study only for its fruits, practical Charlemagne offered to the eager grasp of the studious scholar of York his hand horny with the rub of a sword hilt, and, untrained as he himself was to the pen, claimed Alcuin as an ally. He had eight years before fetched from beyond the Alps the Lombard Deacon Paul, and also that Master Peter, whom he had made court schoolmaster, and of whom he had himself taken some lessons in grammar. Now he

obtained the help of Alcuin, who, besides all that we may infer from his extant letters to Charlemagne and incidental illustrations of life at the Frankish court, has left a special note of his regard for the nobility of the king's mind, "when among so many cares of the palace and occupations of government, he has been anxious thoroughly to know those mysteries of the philosophers, with which another in the sluggishness of ease will hardly try to be acquainted."<sup>1</sup>

But Alcuin strongly protested against his Majesty's wild method of converting the Saxons. Alcuin joined his court in the year when Charlemagne, a religious tiger, with a taste for brains, caused 4500 Saxons to be led to the bank of a small stream flowing into the Weser and there beheaded, crimsoning all the water with their blood. But he gave his confidence to Alcuin as a true man in the world of scholarship as well as a sound practical Christian, and he could bear to be told by him that this was not practical Christianity.

The fearless heathen Saxons of the continent, against whom the enmity of Charlemagne was so inveterate, were related closely to the Anglo-Saxons who had made in Britain the best Christians in Europe. They of the continent, yet unconverted, were true to the death to the religion they then held and to the liberty they cherished, bound not even to each other as Transalbingians, Angrarians, West-falai, west of the Weser, or Ost-falai, east of the Weser, by any recognition of a common suzerain. And when, after a struggle of many years they submitted to the Frankish sovereignty, they retained their own "Laws of the Saxons and of the Frisians," and made good their right to stand as equals to the Franks, paying no tribute, but only, like the Franks, tithes to the clergy.

Charlemagne had at his court a sort of learned academy, in which the members took to themselves, or received, celebrated ancient names. It was from this sort probably that Alcuin took the name of Flaccus. As for Charlemagne, Alcuin addresses him usually as King David, as "sweetest David," or as "most beloved David," but he sees in him a David capable of great wrong, who has need sometimes of a prophetic warning. Always

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<sup>1</sup> De Ratione Animæ.

in the manner of a friend, not of a servant, he meets, therefore, the power of his rugged patron with the wholesomest plain speaking. When Charlemagne, everywhere conqueror, was within a few months of being crowned Emperor of the West, Alcuin is telling him, in 799, that the first man in the world is the Pope; that the second man is the Emperor of the Second Rome in the East; and that the third man is his sweetest David, with a power and a wisdom that give him an influence on which the whole well-being of the Church of Christ depends. In Rome, where piety once abounded, was neither fear of God, wisdom nor love.

*“Alcuin to Charlemagne.”*

“These,” he said to the king, “are the dangerous times once foretold by Truth itself, ‘because the love of many shall wax cold.’ Never neglect care of the head. Let the feet be a grievance rather than the head. Make peace with a misdoing people [the Saxons], if it can be done. Abate a little of your threatening, lest they fly obdurate from before you; but let them be kept in hope until by wholesome counsel they shall be recalled to peace. Hold what you have, lest, seeking to add the less, you lose the greater. Preserve your own sheep-fold, lest the wolf should lay it waste. We should so labour in affairs of others as not to bring hurt to our own. I spoke formerly to you, most sacred Piety, about the exaction of tithes; because it is much better either that the public compulsion should be remitted for awhile, till faith has thoroughly grown in their hearts, if that country be indeed worthy the election of God. They who went into exile were good Christians, as is known in many cases. And they who remained in their country, remained in the dregs of malice. For Babylon, because of the sins of the people, is declared a habitation of devils, as is read in the Prophets.”

So, with a little humouring of his fiercely energetic David, Alcuin ends, and adds for Charlemagne, in hexameters and pentameters, a prayer that the merciful Christ will rule, exalt, protect, adorn, and love him; “and that he will read in the light of clemency that letter which the love of duty wrote.”

Meanwhile Alcuin was teaching in the usual manner by making all knowledge subservient to the one great end of the priest's labours. He classed doctrine, according to the manner of the time, into seven degrees or steps. The first three—Grammar, Rhetoric, and Dialectic (or Logic)—formed the Trivium of Ethics; the next four—Arithmetic, Geometry,

Music, and Astronomy—formed the Quadrivium of Physics, and they all led up, step by step, to Theology.<sup>1</sup> The taste of Charlemagne himself was for astronomy, and a considerable part of Alcuin's extant letters to him consists of replies to questions and desired explanations of the Emperor's own observations in this science. Charlemagne, for example, was once puzzled by the unusually long absence from the sky of Mars, the fiery planet of the conqueror, and Alcuin must account for this. Astronomy, in the eyes of Alcuin, had two uses: one, to display the power of God, and one to fix the Church calendar; the second of these being the use most dwelt upon. Mere figures could be so taught as to take a spiritual sense. Thus, Alcuin, in a letter to a pupil who asks for an explanation of the passage in the Song of Solomon, "There are threescore queens and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number," expounds from Scripture the perfection of 6 and the imperfection of 8; wherefore the world was created in 6 days, but the human race after the flood originated in the number 8; but our Lord was born in the sixth age of the world; proceeding to comment on the progression of numbers and the spirituality of aliquot parts.

Alcuin received grants, established monasteries and schools, was made rich and powerful; but he held simply to his work, teaching Charlemagne's sons, Charles, Pepin, and Louis, in the winter months, when they were not with their father hunting men and beasts; bidding also the King's sister Gisla—whom he called in their academic circle Lucia—and the King's daughters to their sacred study from the loom and spindle. Among Alcuin's extant educational works is one in the form of dialogue between himself and Charlemagne's son Pepin, in the course of which Pepin asking "What is the liberty of May?" Alcuin replies "Innocence." We see the trusted teacher also procuring ransom of prisoners taken by Louis, and joining the expression of his gratitude with admonition to be liberal and kind, pure in his home, just in his kingdom, to have truth on his lips and pious humility within his heart. Of Charles—Charlemagne's

<sup>1</sup> The trivium and quadrivium were thus defined, each in its own familiar hexameter:—

"*Gram.* loquitur; *Dia.* vera docet; *Rhet.* verba colorat,  
*Mus.* canit; *Ar.* numerat; *Geo.* ponderat; *As.* colit astra."

eldest son—he in one letter asks leave faithfully to lay before him some remarks on those parts of his conduct which he considers censurable. For the Emperor's sister Gisla, Alcuin especially wrote a commentary on St. John's Gospel. Charlemagne required that there should be a school attached to every monastery. Many bishoprics and abbacies were in the gift of his imperial hand, and he was liberal in securing from his subjects their full contribution to the power of the Church. Valuable preferment was the reward of merit among Alcuin's pupils and friends; but, although strong in influence at the Frankish Court, Alcuin himself was still only a deacon of York, and to York he returned for a time after having spent eight years in the society of Charlemagne. But David would not part with his Flaccus, and, to hold Alcuin to the promise that he would return from England, sent him, in the official character of Charlemagne's ambassador of peace and friendship, to the chief of the Anglo-Saxon kings, Offa of Mercia,—a monarch jealous of the shelter Charlemagne had given to that Egbert, afterwards King of England, whom Offa had deposed. After an absence of less than two years Alcuin returned to the Court of the Frank emperor in the year 792, and then finally accepted France as his home, receiving from Charlemagne the abbeys of Ferrières and St. Lupus of Troyes, and afterwards that of St. Martin of Tours.

When Alcuin returned, the Byzantine Court had lately sent to Charlemagne the decrees of a second Synod of Nice ordaining image worship. Alcuin brought word to France that the decrees of this synod were in England denounced as execrable, and produced a book, written by himself at York, against its Eastern heresy. It is a book that has not been preserved under his name; but Dr. Lorentz, Alcuin's last biographer, believes that we have it preserved to us in the vehement work known as the *Carolinian Books*, first printed in France in 1549, without the name of editor or printer, reprinted at once in Germany, and eagerly destroyed by the Catholics.<sup>1</sup> Another

<sup>1</sup> 'Alcuins Leben. Ein Beitrag zur Staats- Kirchen- und Cultur-Geschichte der Karolingischen Zeit, von Dr. Friedrich Lorentz, Privat-docenten der Geschichte an der Universität zu Halle.' Halle, 1829. Of this book frequent use is made in the text. There is a translation of it by Jane Mary Slee. London, 1837.

doctrine against which Alcuin battled was that of Felix, Bishop of Urgel in Catalonia, and the aged Elipantus, Archbishop of Toledo, respecting the Adoption of the Messiah. On this subject Alcuin wrote seven books in reply to Felix, and a short letter. Elipantus, who replied with anger, and was answered mildly in another treatise of four books. With advancing age came, however, the desire in Alcuin to quit the Court and devote the rest of his life to monastic duties. He wished to retire to the monastery of St. Boniface at Fulda, distributing its revenues, which had been assigned to him, among his pupils. This Charlemagne would not suffer him to do, but gave him, in the year 796, the then vacant abbacy of St. Martin of Tours, partly because the monks of Tours needed the governing hand of a reformer. With the whole Church, indeed, as he found it upon his accession, Charlemagne had been dissatisfied. He found in the churches and monasteries hunting, fighting, drinking priests, and he forbade all but a few to bear weapons or appear in battle even against the heathen. He forbade, again and again, hunting and hawking by the clergy, or would allow certain monasteries to hunt on condition that they killed no more stags than would yield skin enough for covering their books; so that the more books the more sport. Alcuin also objected strongly to a delight in dramatic representations and antics of the jester that he found among the Frankish clergy. His own friend and pupil Angilbert, called in scholastic intercourse of the Court Homerus—whom Charlemagne trusted in state affairs, and whom Charlemagne's second daughter Bertha trusted well enough to give him two illegitimate sons—brought some rebuke on himself by his felish of these entertainments. "The one thing," says Alcuin, in a letter to the fellow pupil who was Alcuin's home companion, "The one thing I disliked in Homerus was his pleasure in the actors whose empty plays exposed his soul to no little danger. I have therefore written to him about it, to shew him the honest solicitude of my love; and it seemed to me, in fact, inexplicable that a man usually so wise should not perceive that he did what ill assorted with his worth and was in no way laudable.<sup>1</sup> In 789 Charlemagne,

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<sup>1</sup> Ep. 144.



doubtless on Alcuin's prompting, ordered that priests who indulged themselves in theatrical amusements should be deprived of their office.

Then Charlemagne would give out themes on which all the clergy were to preach, while his *missi regis*, the layman and priest who were the sovereign's eyes in each county, should report to him upon their sermons; and because, said Alcuin, "to question wisely is to teach," Charlemagne also gave out questions to which they must send in written replies. "We wish you," said one question, "to tell us truly what you mean when you say that you have renounced the world: and how one is to tell those who have renounced the world from those who are still in it? Is it only by their being unarmed and unmarried?" Thus, with a fresh and rude simplicity of energy, Charlemagne had followed his own way with Alcuin's counsel.

As Alcuin advanced in years, he advanced also in austerity. The strictness that made him intolerant of the levity of monkish plays caused him even to forbid the pupils in his school at Tours to read the philosophy and poetry of ancient Greece or Rome. In the 'Æneid,' he saw only the heathen liar *Virgile*; 'the good monk,' he said, "should find enough to content him in the Christian poets." The spade and hoe were also taken at Tours from the hands of the monks; and they all had pens placed between their fingers, for they were told that the copying of books was better than the cultivation of the vine, by as much as reading lifted the soul higher than wine. The fame of the school spread, and it was much frequented. A commission of copyists was sent under Wizo to the library at York, and the utmost care in copying was enforced upon all. Roman letters took the place of the pointed Merovingian characters, and there was produced a body of manuscript remarkable at this day for its neatness and elegance. Alcuin multiplied greatly in France clear trustworthy copies of religious books; and multiplied greatly also the number of men able to read them, and to turn them to a right account. He died on the 19th May in the year 804, troubled by the complaint of Charlemagne, that the monks of Tours had not done credit to his training, and himself under mild rebuke for having justified them, after the fact, in forcibly withholding from Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans, a condemned

ecclesiastic of his, who had escaped from prison and sought sanctuary at the altar of St. Martin's.

It was a favourite phrase of Alcuin's to speak of himself as "the humble Levite;" and that his whole mind and life was given, with a Christian humility, where there was great temptation to self-seeking and self-praise, to earnest and effective labour as a servant in the temple of God none ever doubted.

His extant writings are 232 letters, with four fragments; <sup>1</sup> Questions and Answers upon Genesis; Expositions of Alcuin's Writings. the Penitential and other Psalms; Commentaries on Canticles and Ecclesiastes; seven books of Commentary on the Gospel of St. John; Expositions of Paul's Epistles to Philemon and the Hebrews; five books of Commentary on the Apocalypse; three books and some questions on Faith in the Trinity; a book on the Holy Spirit; the books against Felix and Elipandus; a long treatise on the Sacraments of the Church and Offices of the Liturgy; shorter books on Virtues and Vices, Free-will and the Confession of Sins; the Lives of Willibrord, Vedastus, and Richarius; inscriptions, epigrams, and poems. His educational ~~works are~~—one on Grammar, in dialogue, between the Teacher, a Saxon, and a Frank; one on Orthography, in the usual form of alphabetical notes of mistakes to be avoided; two others are on Rhetoric and the Virtues, and on Dialectics—both these books being in a Dialogue with Charlemagne himself. There is also the Dialogue of Disputation between Alcuin and Pepin, and a little book about the calculations of the moon with a view to Easter. Other works are, on doubtful authority, ascribed to him. Austerely practical, Alcuin achieved much for the education of the Franks, and for the bettering of discipline among their clergy, bringing for aid to his purpose, Charlemagne's powers of compulsion into active exercise. His Latin verse does not display him as a poet. He writes with the vigour of a strong and honest mind; but no warmth of imagination animates his zeal to make all things subservient to the highest end. While he cast from him the Virgil that, as a lad at York, we are told, he hid under his bedclothes from the eyes of the brother who came with a cane to rouse the sleepers to nocturns, Alcuin

fastened upon the Christian poets, and on Scripture itself, with a hard literalness that was in him always respectable. But it was expressed as well as unwittingly caricatured by Fredegis, his pupil and appointed successor at Tours, when, in his treatise on 'Nothing and Darkness,' he affirmed that Nothing was Something, because God made everything out of it; and that Darkness was a substance, because Scripture had said of it that it was thick and might be felt.

Besides those who have been already mentioned there were other writers who expressed the English mind in Latin verse, during the eighth century and the earlier part of the ninth. One was the Worcestershire monk Tatwine, made Archbishop of Canterbury in the year 731, and during whose primacy the question of the relative dignity of the sees of York and Canterbury was decided in favour of Canterbury by Pope Gregory III. Tatwine, like Aldhelm, wrote Latin enigmas which are still extant in MS.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 813, Louis le Débonnaire, or the Pious, Charlemagne's only surviving son, was ordered by his father to put the imperial crown on his own head in the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle. In 819 he married Judith, the daughter of the Bavarian Count Guelph, whose descendants reign still in Britain, Hanover, and Brunswick. He had three sons by his first wife, and now Judith gave him a fourth and favourite son, Charles (the Bald). Into what troubles his sons brought the weak old king—how he died in 840, and, after war among themselves, his sons, in 843, divided the empire of Charlemagne into three parts, an Italy of mixed nationalities, a sufficiently uniform Germany, and a French nation, which fell to the part of Charles the Bald; who in 875 seized part of the Italian portion, and in 876 received the imperial crown from Pope John VIII, two years before his death—we may call summarily to mind as we pass next to an English writer famous at the court of Charles the Bald. Through the earnest practical digestion of accepted knowledge by which the literature of the Anglo-Saxons is throughout very distinctly characterised, and in

<sup>1</sup>In one known copy only, together with enigmas of Aldhelm, Symposias, &c. MS. Reg. 12, c. xxiii.

strong contrast to the severe literalness of Alcuin, there breaks even from the midst of the Church one gleam at least of the vivacity and daring of that more inventive Celtic wit which has since flavoured so happily the fibrous and substantial, if still somewhat insipid, Saxonism of the perfected English mind.

John Scotus Erigena may not have been ordained one of the clergy. He describes himself only as "the last of the students of wisdom." Two contemporaries, Hincmar and Pope Nicolas I., in writing of him to Charles the Bald, described him as "Joannes, genere Scotus,"<sup>1</sup> "quidam vir," or "Scotus ille." Anastasius called him Scottigena. Pardulus, bishop of Laudun, wrote of him about 853 as "that Scot named John, who is in the palace of the King." His name and nature answer for his Celtic origin. He might have been Scot of Erin; but if so, it is argued, why was he never called before the sixteenth century Erinigena? He was called, as Thomas Gale pointed out,<sup>2</sup> Erigena or Eriugena. In the oldest Codex,<sup>3</sup> that used by Archbishop Usher, he is called Eriugena. On this ground a Scotch writer<sup>4</sup> claims him as an "Ayrshire man, born in the town of Ayr. But Gale himself brought him from Wales, or a part of Herefordshire, then Welsh, called Ergene,<sup>5</sup> or by the Welsh Erynug or Ereinnuc, where there was a place called Eriaven. Of his birth and parentage, and of the date of his birth, nothing is really known. It is a reasonable inference that he was trained in one of the monasteries of this country, which, before the onslaughts of the Danes, were the chief seats of European learning. Charlemagne had grafted on the fruitless stock of his own empire a vigorous shoot of English scholarship in Alcuin, who spread among the Franks his schools, wherein pupils were to be carried part of the way, or all the way, through the trivium and quadrivium. Scholarship was in high demand in France when in this country it was being overwhelmed by the invaders. Erigena went, therefore, to France, where he was received with high favour by Charles the

<sup>1</sup> Natalis Alexander in Hist. Eccl. sec. IX. et X. Dissert. XIV., § 4.

<sup>2</sup> In his Testimonies of the Ancients upon J. Sc. E.

<sup>3</sup> In the library of Trin. Coll., Cam.

<sup>4</sup> George Mackenzie in Lives and Characters of Scots Writers. Edinburgh, 1708. Vol. i. p. 49.

<sup>5</sup> Domesday Book called it Archenefeldt, i.e. Ergene.

Bald. That king accounted him a miracle of wit and knowledge, and, though quick-tempered, made the free-spoken Scot his table companion and friend, without even in one instance resenting his free speech. Said the King to the logician, sitting opposite to him, "What parts a Scot from a sot?" "Only the table," said Erigena. A dish, containing two great fishes and a little one, was offered to the Scot when he (a little man) sat at the King's table between two fat priests. The King bade him divide the dish with his two neighbours. He did so, taking to himself the two big fishes, and leaving to his two neighbours the little one. "That is unfair," said the King. "Quite fair," said Erigena. "There," pointing to the two whales and himself, "are two big ones and a little one; and there," pointing to his two fat neighbours and the sprat, "are two big ones and a little one."<sup>1</sup> Erigena was distinguished among Frankish clergy by his knowledge of Greek. He had an imagination to be touched by Plato's spiritual fancy, and he had read in their own tongue many of the Greek fathers. At the desire, therefore, of Charles, he translated for him into Latin the works ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite, which had been sent in 827 by the Greek emperor, Michael Balbus, as a present to Louis le Débonnaire. Louis had commissioned Abbot Hilduin, of the abbey of St. Dionysius, or Denys, to translate them into Latin; but no more than that is heard of Hilduin's version.<sup>2</sup>

Dionysius the Areopagite was supposed to have been converted by St. Paul, and to have been the first bishop of the Christians in Athens. It was only after the fifth century that mystical writings in the Greek language appeared under his name, on the Hierarchies of Heaven; the Hierarchies, or successive Steps of the Mysteries of the Church; the Names of God applied to the Study of the Divine Nature; on Mystical Theology; with ten letters, more or less mystical, one said to have been written to St. John at Patmos, some of them discussing the humanity and person of Christ, others suggesting charitable

<sup>1</sup> The stories are in Roger de Hoveden and in Gale.

<sup>2</sup> Hilduin in *Areopagiticus*, ed. Cologne, 1563, p. 66. I quote through Staudenmaier, whose work—'Johannes Scotus Erigena und die Wissenschaft seiner Zeit'—von Dr. Franz Anton Staudenmaier, Prof. der Theologie an der Katholischen Fakultät zu Giessen (Frankfort, 1834)—was the first good German study of Erigena.

views of the relation of the Church to the Heathen and the heretic. These writings were first produced at a conference at Constantinople, in the year 532, to support the doctrines of a particular sect then impugned. Disowned then as unheard of, they made their way slowly, till Gregory the Great at the end of the century made free use of the book on the Heavenly Hierarchy. In the middle of the seventh century Maximus Confessor appeared as a Greek scholiast upon the *Areopagitica*; and a century later John of Damascus accepted them as dogmatic authorities. The *Areopagite*, then, passed for a Greek father, when Erigena, half suspected of heresy for his Platonic tendencies and his free speech, translated into Latin for Charles the Bald, with a rigid literalness, first Dionysius, and afterwards, at the King's request, his scholiast Maximus. This brought their mysticism—with especial favour to the sections upon Angels and the Sacraments, and the Nature of God—home to the theologians of Western Europe.

Erigena's own great work is on the Division of Nature, in five books, which blended Platonism with doctrines of the The Division of Nature. *Outrich*. His next work, on Predestination, opposed Augustine's doctrine of the predestination of some to damnation, some to bliss; and it approached so closely to the doctrines of Pelagius that the synod at Valentia in 855 formally declared the double predestination to be a doctrine of the Church, pronounced Erigena's book "rather a comment of the Devil than an argument of the faith;" and, as Erigena had not paid any attention to the Pope's censure of a translation of Dionysius without his consent or privity, the influence of Rome was, it is said by some writers, now used successfully to procure the expulsion of "that Scot" from Paris. The death of his patron, Charles the Bald, caused Erigena then to return to England, where William of Malmesbury tells how he is reported to have died:—

"A man," says the English chronicler, "of clear understanding and amazing eloquence. He had long since, from the continued tumult of war around him, retired into France to Charles the Bald, at whose request he translated the *Hierarchia* of Dionysius the *Areopagite*, word for word, out of the Greek into Latin. He composed a book also, which he entitled *περὶ φύσεων μερισμῶν*, or *de Divisione Naturæ*, extremely useful in solving the perplexity of certain indispensable inquiries, if he be pardoned for some things in which he deviated

from the opinions of the Latins, through too close attention to the Greeks. In after time allured by the munificence of Alfred, he came into England, and at our monastery (of Malmesbury), as report says, was pierced with iron styles of the boys whom he was instructing, and was even looked upon as a martyr."

Roger of Hoveden tells the same story: and there is clearly no confusion in the mind of either writer between Erigena and Alfred's Abbot John of Athelney. Nor, considering the imputation of heresy against him, thrice confirmed by the Roman Church, is there anything improbable in the murder of Erigena about the year 884 by his pupils, urged into the fit spirit of theologic hate.

Erigena in his teaching set out with the doctrine that there is perfect harmony between Reason and Revelation; that true Religion is identical with true Philosophy; the source of both is the Divine Wisdom, and they cannot contradict each other. The highest aim of philosophy is, he taught, contemplation of God in his own nature, and in Man his image; so that the philosopher comes by intellectual vision into immediate contact with the absolute. Many things are incomprehensible. Faith, he said, must precede knowledge; authority—though it be, as a principle of action, apart from and below reason—is necessary for all who are not capable of independent reflection; and Faith itself is but the ground from which there springs through Reason—which understands what is true in belief—Knowledge of God. All depends in philosophy upon the point of view. A part seen separately may be a disturbing contradiction; while if we take in at one view the whole ground, it will develop into harmony and beauty. It is the power of large view in speculation that alone makes a right, pious, and Catholic philosopher.

The way of research, said Erigena, is by four stages: Divide, Define, Illustrate (the unknown by the known), and Analyse. His division of Nature was into four species: the Creator Uncreate; the Creator Created (the Word, or Son of God, through whom all things are); the Created, not Creating (the world and its creatures); the neither Created nor Creating (God, into whom all things return, and in whom they will be at rest). The gist of his argument being, that in God all things begin and end; and that the whole system of Philosophy tends to a knowledge of the Unity of the Creator. Erigena denied eternity of

evil; it is, he said, the opposite to the eternal God, and therefore not eternal. It is a corruption of good, and a vice is a spoilt virtue; it can have no substantial existence. It will disappear when all returns to God. The doctrine of eternal fire Erigena treated as a material adaptation of a spiritual thought to the unstrengthened faith. His book on the Division of Nature, developing his reasonings with lively force in form of dialogue between pupil and master, has been, not unjustly, described as the starting-point of the Scholasticism, as well as of the Mysticism of theology, in the next centuries. Of his theology it is not for this book to treat. What we have here especially to notice is, the symbolic character of all this mystical philosophy; and the further incitement given by the dramatic freshness with which its distinctions and interpretations are evolved, to that turn for allegory which was very manifest already in the scholars of the monasteries. Erigena, for example, in one passage illustrates his whole scheme of the world by applying to it, as an allegory, the Scripture story of Pharaoh and the Israelites. He speaks of an imagined Pharaoh—the devil—from whom one form of the departure of our nature is, under its spiritual guide (Moses), who leads by the safe path of human life, through the divided depths of the reasoning powers (the Red Sea), and brings into subjection the multitude of the vices (the rebellious people); so that, after the fleshly thoughts (men) have perished in the wilderness of the virtues, where all that is perishable decays, man's nature will come spiritually into the promised land with the sons of good works. Again, of Paradise, he says that it may have existed in the material world, or may be spiritual, or it may be both spiritual and material; and then, preferring the third view, he figures Paradise as man himself; Adam, as *νοῦς*, the intellectual part; Eve, as *αἰσθησις*, the æsthetic; Christ, the water-spring, and God, the source of life, that flows through Eden, that is to say, through the spirit of man, and has four outlets in the four cardinal virtues. Phison, in Greek Ganges, is Prudence; Gihon, the Nile, is Self-restraint; the swift tumultuous Tigris is Courage; the Euphrates, Justice; and the parallel is thus pursued through many details.

Although the influence of Erigena was great, in spite of his condemnation in his lifetime by the Synods of Valentia and



Langres, and by letters of Pope Nicolas, his system never was admitted as the code of a distinct school of philosophy. Parts of his teaching became current, as parts only had been condemned. Especially condemned were his view of predestination and his denial of the miraculous and actual transformation of the bread and wine of the Sacrament, which, in a lost book of his, he taught should be received *spiritually*. His system was eclectic. He sought truth with acute study, placing reason high above authority; and he was somewhat nearer in his mysticism to the pure ideal of Plato, than to the less spiritual idealisation of the Platonist. If he deserves the name given to him sometimes as the father of Western scholastic philosophy, he earns it, not for his dogmatism, but by the honour due to him of being the first who taught distinctively and effectively the certain truth that between true religion and a true philosophy there is and can be no antagonism, but that they are one and inseparable.<sup>1</sup>

Of Ethelwolf, who wrote a Latin poem on the abbots and pious men of the monastery of St. Peter's in Lindisfarne,<sup>2</sup> it is known only that he was placed in that monastery when Sigfrid was abbot; therefore, towards the year 780. One of his teachers was named Iglac (Hygelac?), and of him there was, in a lost poem, a longer account.

<sup>1</sup> The last good work upon the life and doctrine of Erigena, from which I have taken, in this notice, one or two suggestions, is that of Dr. Theodor Christlieb:—‘*Leben und Lehre des Joh. Scotus Erigena in ihrem Zusammenhang mit der vorhergehenden und unter Angabe ihrer Berührungspuncte mit der neueren Philosophie und Theologie, dargestellt von Dr. Theodor Christlieb, Pastor der deutschen evang. Kirche, Islington, London. Mit Vorwort von Professor Dr. Landerer*,’ Gotha, 1860. The stout protest of an orthodox Roman Catholic against the recent tendency of even Roman Catholic professors to revive with honour the name of Erigena, although the Pope of his day did condemn him, is by Dr. Nicolas Möllers, Professor of the Catholic University at Leuven, in Belgium. ‘*Johannes Scotus Erigena und seine Irrthümer*,’ Mayence, 1844. I have made some use also of a short Latin monograph of Erigena, ‘*De Joanne Scoto Erigena Commentatio*,’ Bonn. 1845, and more of O. Gruber’s comprehensive article upon Erigena in Ersch and Gruber’s *Allgemeine Encyclopädie*. Valuable notices of Erigena are to be found in M. Guizot’s ‘*History of Civilization in France*,’ and in the Rev. F. W. Maurice’s *Encyclopædia Metropolitana Treatise on Mediæval Philosophy*.

<sup>2</sup> There is a MS. of it at Cambridge, and one also in the Bodleian. It was first printed by Mabillon in the *Acts of the Benedictine Saints*.

Dicuil was an Irish monk, who travelled in his youth, then settled in an Irish monastery in France, at the school of a countryman named Suibne, and <sup>Dicuil.</sup> received there an account of a visit to the Holy Land made before the year 767 by a monk named Fidelis. This account, with geographical details picked up from other informants, he included in a description of the earth written A.D. 825. At that time Dicuil must have been seventy years old. His book, entitled '*De Mensurâ Orbis Terræ*,'<sup>1</sup> was founded upon a work in repute among geographers of his own day, which contained the measures of the Roman Empire as they were said to have been taken under the Emperor Theodosius. Not the least interesting point in it is an example it gives of the devotion of that native Church which laboured quietly while Rome laboured ambitiously, and of which the fame has been drowned under trumpetings of Gregory and Austin. Dicuil says that he had spoken with priests who had visited the remote island of Thule, far away in the north. Between it and Britain are a cluster of islets (the Faroes) thronged with sheep and sea-birds, inhabited for upwards of a hundred years by Irish hermits who had been driven away by the Northern Rovers. Dicuil's description of the summer day and winter night in Thule shows that he means Iceland, and in Iceland, says a recent traveller, we find the traces of these priests in places bearing such names as Patreksfjord and Erlendr-ey.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Two MSS. are in the Imperial Library at Paris. The book was edited for the press in Paris by C. A. Walckenaer in 1807, and by A. Letronne in 1814.

<sup>2</sup> '*Iceland: its Scenes and Sagas.*' By Sabine Baring-Gould, M.A. London, 1863.

## CHAPTER XI.

ATTENTION is now due to another Celtic writer. A Latin 'History of the Britons' of obscure origin is ascribed  
 Nennius. to a writer called Nennius on the authority of the Prologue or Prologues contained in some of the manuscripts; for two Prologues are extant, which agree in many particulars, and both ascribe the work to Nennius, the disciple of Elbodus or Elvodugus, and one, the longer one, which is found only in a single MS., assigns a date to its authorship, namely the year 858. An Elbodus, Bishop of North Wales, died in the year 809. We receive the name of Nennius, as well as the date, from Prologues, of which no copies are found earlier than the twelfth century. There is a discrepancy of thirty-eight years between the body of the work and the longer Prologue as to the date corresponding to the twenty-fourth year of the sovereign, Mervin, King of the Britons, who was upon the throne when the whole was said to have been written. No MS. earlier than the twelfth century contains a Prologue, and internal evidence only sets forth, with variation of date in different copies, that the work was written in the year after the Passion of our Lord 796, or 800, or 879, or in the year of the world 6108, which would be, according to the History itself, A.D. 980. A Paris MS., written in the thirteenth century, adds 647 years to A.D. 347, there assigned to the arrival of the Saxons, and thus brings down the period of composition to the year 994. The confusion and uncertainty on the subject of this History of the Britons caused it to be ascribed to Gildas in some of the copies. The earliest MS.—which twice refers to the year 946 or 947—ascribes the work neither to Nennius nor to Gildas, but to "Marcus the Anachorite, a bishop of the British nation." Constantius Hericus, who wrote an account of the Life and Miracles of St. Germanus, which he dedicated in 876 or 877 to Charles the Bald, cites as authority for several

miracles wrought by Germanus, "a certain old man named Mark, a Bishop of the British nation and a native of that island." And he quotes as from the dictation of Mark the adventures of Germanus and the cowherd as we find them in the 'History of the Britons.' But if Mark was an old man in 877, he could not have lived to refer in his book to the year 946, and it is indeed most probable that the work, as we now have it, has received addition from several hands.

In substance this *Historia Britonum* is clearly of Cymric origin, being a confused depository of British historical traditions, setting out with the Trojan origin of the Britons, interrupting the reign of Vortigern, which is told as from genuine old tradition, with a long account of the miracles of St. Germanus; a second time thrusting Germanus abruptly into the narrative; telling the legend of St. Patrick where nothing whatever in the context calls for it, and ending with an account of the exploits of Arthur and the twelve battles in which he routed the Saxons. The frequent recurrence of the number three, in consonance with the Cymric partiality for triads, and such statements as that a tower of glass was discovered in the middle of the sea, that Vortigern's castle, overthrown by magic, could be built only by sprinkling with the blood of a boy who had no father, or that King Arthur with his own hand slew 960 men in one battle, show the legendary spirit of the work.<sup>1</sup>

We shall hear more of King Arthur; but our path now brings us into the presence of King Alfred. King Alfred, who did not until after the sixteenth century receive his surname <sup>Egbert's England.</sup> of the Great, was descended from that Cerdic, who, landing in 495 on the south coast of England, founded the kingdom of Wessex. Of Alfred's predecessors, Ina, who began to reign in the year 689, had been the first who, besides fighting, had worked for the social welfare of his kingdom. He caused the laws of his land to be committed to writing, and they have descended to our time in the collection made by order of King Alfred. It was King Ina who had made Aldhelm Bishop of

<sup>1</sup> I here follow the argument of the Rev. Joseph Stevenson, in his preface to the best edition of Nennius—that published in 1838 by the English Historical Society. The oldest MS. is of the tenth century, Harleian 3859 (fol. 135 b).

Sherborne. King Ina abdicated in 725, and went with his wife Athelburh to Rome, where they both ended their days in exercises of religion. After Ina's reign, Wessex was much troubled by strife about the crown, until Beorhtric, who married a daughter of the strong Mercian King Offa, with Offa's help excluded Egbert, who had chief hereditary right. Beorhtric reigned in peace until he died of poison mixed by his wife for one of his favourite ealdormen. Charlemagne was then on his way to be crowned Emperor of the West, and Egbert, who had spent at the court and in the camp of Charlemagne his thirteen years of exile and apprenticeship to sovereignty, took possession of the throne to which his right was clear. This was the King who, according to contestible authorities of the late Anglo-Norman period, at a Witenagemot held at Winchester, first gave to the provinces over which he ruled the name of Anglia or England. From his reign all the chroniclers agree in speaking no more of Bretwaldas, but thenceforth of kings of England. It was in Egbert's time that the power of the South first mastered that of the North, his forces being victorious even beyond the Humber. Nevertheless, while his superior power was known, Egbert's own kingdom, stretching from Kent westwards, did not extend north of the Thames.

It was in Egbert's reign, too, that the Northmen of the Scandinavian continent and islands, called Danes by the Anglo-Saxons, became widely known as fighting emigrants, who visited the coasts of England, France, and even Spain. In 843 fifty-four of their vessels went up the Guadalquivir as far as Seville. In 831 they had landed on Sheppey Island, in the following year they appeared with thirty-five ships before Charmouth in Dorsetshire. In 835 they came again, and finding Egbert prepared for them, were beaten at Hingston Down; Egbert also punished the Cymry for having favoured them. Egbert dying in 838, was succeeded by his weaker son Ethelwulf who, as heir-apparent, had been under his father, King of Kent, and whose office as King of Kent passed to his own son Athelstane.

The chief guide of Ethelwulf in arts of peace was Swithun, a monk of Winchester, who was ordained priest in the year 830, and whose repute for learning had caused Egbert to commit

to him the instruction of his son. It was by Swithun's advice that, in 853, Ethelwulf sent his youngest son Alfred, then only five years old, to Rome, with a large retinue including, perhaps, Swithun himself. Two years afterwards, having, by Swithun's advice, given a tenth of his kingdom to the Church, Ethelwulf went to Rome himself, with his son Alfred, taking extravagant gifts and ordaining from his private property that perpetual annuity to Rome for the salvation of his soul which was the foundation of the claim of "Peter's Pence." He stayed at Rome for a year, and on his return married, as second or third wife, Judith the daughter of Charles the Bald, then only thirteen years old. Ethelwulf was met by civil war on his return to England, his old counsellor the fighting Bishop Alstan, and his own son Ethelbald, being chiefs of the insurrection. He yielded to his son a large part of his kingdom, and died, two years and a half later, in the year 858. Swithun survived four or five years in his bishopric of Winchester, where he had repaired churches and built a bridge, living to see the city plundered by the Northmen, who since the year 832 had made fitfully their fierce descents.

As King of Kent, Ethelwulf had married, probably after a first wife of his youth who was the mother of Athelstane, Osburh the daughter of his cupbearer Oslac, Jute by race and descended from a nephew of Cerdic. Alfred's biographer Asser calls Osburh "a most pious woman, noble of mind and of blood." Ethelbald was the eldest, Alfred was the youngest, of her children. When Ethelbald already was a youth Alfred was born in the year 849, at Wantage, one of the numerous royal villas to which the Kings of Wessex, who had not a capital, shifted their court at will. When Ethelbald died, Ethelbert, King of Kent, set aside the succession of Ethelred established by his father's will. Alfred's age was eleven, and he lived with the new King, his brother, of whose reign there are extant documents bearing the signature of Alfred. In spite of the decay of learning and the general confusion caused by the frequent attacks of the Northmen, Prince Alfred was now following a natural bent for study, labouring to write and read, and learn by heart, as he took pleasure in doing, the old songs of the people. King Ethelbert died in the year 866, Alfred's

age then being seventeen, and Ethelred, the third brother, succeeded him; retaining, because of the danger to the coast, Kent, not as the kingdom of the heir-apparent, but as part of Wessex.<sup>1</sup> Alfred was recognised as the King's heir and deputy.

But in the beginning of the reign of Ethelred the Northmen or Danes, wafted over by the autumnal east wind of the year 866, made a concerted attack of unprecedented violence upon the eastern coast of Britain, with the design of forming settlements. The East Angles of the coast made terms with them at once, and gave them winter quarters. In the spring the Northmen set out on a desolating march by the banks of the Humber, stripping and burning churches and monasteries. It was then that Abbess Hilda's Monastery of Streoneshalh, the religious home of Cædmon, was destroyed; and Danish occupation afterwards gave to the place the name of Whitby. The Northmen destroyed much; but, towards the end of the following winter, the Northumbrians, making head against them, drove them with thinned numbers into York. In York they were beset so closely that in March, 868, they made a fierce sally and cut their way through the besieging force. Many chiefs and the two Northumbrian kings were left among the dead. Setting up north of the Tyne a king of their own nomination, and themselves holding the region to the south, the Northmen in the following winter marched into Mercia and took Nottingham Castle. Alfred, in Wessex, was then in his twentieth year just married to Ealhswith, daughter of a great Lincolnshire earl and a descendant of the royal family of Mercia. The wedding-feast was held in Mercia, and, in the midst of the rejoicing, Alfred was seized by a strange illness—probably epilepsy—that remained by him, so that he was never sure of not being attacked by it. When the visitation came, he was powerless; but the repose of a day, or night, or even an hour, would revive him.

The forces of Wessex were, after Alfred's marriage, joined to those of Mercia, and even the priests took sword in hand against the spoilers of the churches and the abbéys. The Danes were besieged in Nottingham Castle. Not overcome, but treated

<sup>1</sup>He signed himself "*Rex Occidentaliū Saxonū, necnon et Cantuariorū.*"

with, they went back to York; and, after a little while, again marched south as far as Thetford, headed by "Ingvar of the mighty mind and Ubba of the wonderful daring."<sup>1</sup>

Nearly at the same time another division of Northmen from the Humber plundered and burnt the monastery, and massacred the monks, of Bardene in Lindesey. Nobles and monks mustered in force against them, and killed three of their chiefs on the first day's fight; but in the night the Danes were reinforced by Ingvar and Ubba, and by other chiefs, among whom were a Healfdene and Guthrum; and the next day's battle was a Danish victory, followed by the havoc of the abbeys at Croyland, Peterborough, Huntingdon, and Ely.<sup>2</sup> At Thetford, too, the Northmen were victorious. East Anglia, paganised again, was ruled by Guthrum. Other leaders were the masters of Northumbria, and now the Thames was entered by Danes under the chiefs Healfdene and Bagseeg, and their Earls Osborn, Frene, Harald, and two Sidroes, who, spreading in separate bodies over the southern coast, seized as their convenient head-quarters the royal castle at Reading, whence they had a ready water-street between them and the sea. In the attempt to recover Reading, Ethelred and Alfred were defeated, but four days afterwards the Northmen were beaten at a battle of Ashdown, in which Alfred distinguished himself by boldness of successful attack, and Ethelred with his own hand killed Healfdene's brother-king. The Northmen, still holding Reading, claimed a fortnight afterwards the victory in the next battle, at Basing; and the extension of their ravages is shown by the fact that the next battle was at Merton, where Ethelred and Alfred were victorious during a great part of the day, but left the Danes at night possessors of the field.

Soon after this defeat Ethelred died, in the spring of the year 871. Alfred, aged twenty-two, succeeded, and in the first summer of his reign a large fleet of Northmen Alfred king, arrived at their head-quarters in Reading. At the end of the year Alfred, with the consent of his nobles, paid the Danes money for peace. They then crossed the Thames, established

<sup>1</sup> Henry of Huntingdon.

<sup>2</sup> The story of this battle is told in detail by Ingulph of Croyland.



their winter-quarters near London, and sailed out of the Thames again in the winter of 872, on promise of tribute from Alfred's relation, Burhred, King of Mercia, who there ruled. But they went no farther than to Northumbria; then again visited Lindsey, penetrated to the heart of Mercia, and destroyed the Monastery of Repton, where the former kings of Mercia were buried. Burhred, after a reign of twenty-two years, went to Rome as a pilgrim and there died. The Northmen set up a tributary puppet-king, deposing him when he became less flexible than they required. They made none of their own chiefs supreme, although over a large part of the eastern coast of England they were now settled as peaceful colonists in towns and villages, where their descendants still inherit many of their names, much of their bodily form, and contribute to the common stock of English something of their language.

Rollo, who won in France firm footing for the Northmen, lived at this time, and had been with the rest in England; the subsequent Norman conquest of England being a conquest by descendants of the brethren of these Northmen, who were in King Alfred's time finding their way up the Seine as well as up the Thames. But while their character was in France considerably modified by marriage with the Celtic women, they were in England very little modified by intermarrying with a Teutonic race related closely to their own, and that was in part, indeed, an old graft from precisely the same stock.

In the year 875 the Northmen in this country who remained in arms formed two armies. That of the North was under Healfdene, and that of the South under Guthrum. There was little more to be taken from the Angles of the plains, and an attack was now made on the Cymry, who still occupied Strathclyde along the western coast from Clyde to Cumberland. But here there was no wealth. Healfdene's warriors were compelled to parcel out the ground and labour upon it themselves for food, if they would eat. Guthrum and his host settled in Cambridge, and seized Warham on the coast of Dorset. Again King Alfred partly bought them off with gold. But they kept Warham, and seized Exeter, where also the Cymry were numerous, and where Rollo spent a winter with them; thence also they sent assistance to their friends who were plundering the

French seaport-towns. But when the Northmen had lost most of their ships in a great storm, they in turn sought and made terms with Alfred for their departure out of Exeter. They went, some northward to settle in Mercia, some to join in an attack upon the Cymry of South Wales; but here again they found a race no richer than that of Strathclyde. Reckless of compacts, a fresh attack of the Northmen on Wessex was maintained by sea and land in the year 878. The whole country was now overrun, and the Cymry, while grieving for themselves, perhaps did not lament the retribution that seemed to have fallen on their former conquerors.<sup>1</sup>

It was then that Alfred, instead of flying across to France like many of his nobles, or giving himself up to a devout end in Rome, withdrew to a secure winter retreat among the marshes of Somerset, where the Parrot joins the Thone. There he threw up defensive works and lived in Athelney, the Island of Princes, with a small band of nobles and warriors, who snatched their food from the surrounding enemy. Alfred of Athelney was made, after a few generations, by the songs and stories of the people, the hero of such fables as that of the burning of loaves in the cowherd's oven, or of his visit disguised as a minstrel to the Danish camp; the Church, too, afterwards told how the good king read the Psalms, and was miraculously sustained and comforted. But he went there simply to levy war. Wintering only at Athelney, he rallied to his standard during the winter months the chiefs of Somerset, organised diligently a new muster of troops, and marching out in the following May to Selwood Forest, was joined on an appointed day by troops from Somerset, Wilts, Hants, and Dorset. On the next day he marched with his army against the Northmen at Chippenham, and, after one more night's rest, came upon them and defeated them in battle. Then he besieged them, and, at the end of a fortnight, forced from them promises to depart, with offer of as many hostages as he would take. Their chief Guthrum at the same time declared his willingness to become a Christian, and, Alfred being his godfather, he was baptized with all his followers. Alfred agreed to leave to the

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<sup>1</sup> Ethelwold speaks of a "civilis discordia secula."

Northmen their colony in East Anglia, between which and his own territory there were settled boundaries that left to Alfred a considerable part of Mercia. The treaty was broken, and it is said by Norman writers that Rollo came over to help Guthrum in the breaking of it; but, on the whole, the Danes were thenceforth kept to their East Anglian settlement, where they lived by their industry and blended with the English people.

So much of the earlier political history of Alfred belongs to the story of the formation of the English language, by accounting for its later Scandinavian element. The rest of his reign belongs to the history of English literature.

The influence of the Church at this period was conspicuous not in literature only. King Alfred's laws, which include those of Ina, begin by taking laws of Moses from the Scripture, and pass to New-Testament ordinances, which are summed up with the text, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them;" to which is added, "By this one commandment man shall know whether he does right, then he will require no other law-book."

Within twenty years the religious element in common laws and the influences of constant intercourse made Christians of the Danes upon the Eastern coast, but their assaults had broken up the active intellectual organisation of the Church at large, and Alfred had to lament<sup>1</sup> "that there are only a few on this side of the Humber who can understand the Divine Service, or even explain a Latin epistle in English; and, I believe, not many on the other side of the Humber either. But they are so few, that indeed I cannot remember one south of the Thames when I began to reign." Alfred strengthened his relations with Rome as the centre of religious life, and is even said by contemporary annals to have opened the first intercourse between England and India by sending, in fulfilment of a vow, a mission with rich presents to the Christian colony supposed to have been founded in the remote East by the preaching of St. Thomas. Among his chief advisers and helpers in the revival of the English Church were Wenefrith, of Wor-

Decay of  
learning.

<sup>1</sup> In the Preface to his Translation of the *Regula Pastoralis* of Gregory I.

cester; Plegmund, another Mercian, who was made Primate on the death of Archbishop Athelred in 890, and survived to the year 923; Grimbold, whom Alfred brought from among the Franks, and made Abbot of the Winchester New Monastery; John the Old Saxon, sometimes confounded with John Erigena, who was brought from the monastery of Corvey to be established in a new monastery on the Island of Athelney; and Asser, who became the king's biographer.

Asser, invited out of Wales, first came to the King at his royal seat of Dene (West or East Dean, near Chichester), and being pressed wholly to cross the Severn and

Alfred's  
advisers.

Asser.

devote himself to the King's service, hesitated, he says of himself, "to desert the holy spot where I had been born, educated, and consecrated, for the sake of worldly might and splendour." Then Alfred urged that Asser should be for six months of the year with the King, and for the other six at his Welsh monastery of St. David's. The monk would not agree to that without the consent of his community, but promised to return to the King in six months with a satisfactory answer. In Wales he was seized with a fever, whereby he was prevented from returning at the stipulated time; Alfred sent, therefore, messengers to seek him. It was then agreed that it would be for the well-being of the monastery that Asser should divide his time between the King's Court and St. David's. The King at first kept his new councillor for eight months, and, when he was resolved to go to Wales, gave him two monasteries with all that pertained to them, a costly silk pallium, and as much incense as a man could carry; telling him that he had given him so little in order that hereafter he might give him more. And the King gave him afterwards Exeter, with a parish (it was not at that time a bishopric). Having made Asser an abbot, Alfred made him also a bishop, of what see it is not said; but he died, in the year 910, Bishop of Sherborne. In all this the plan of Alfred was to re-establish monasteries as the nervous centres of his kingdom, seats of thought, and of a true life.

Alfred's  
labour for a  
revival of  
learning.

Through them he hoped to revive and spread the education of the entire people, his wish being, as expressed in his own words,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Preface to his Translation of the Regula Pastoralis. Bodleian MS. Hatton 20.

"that the whole body of free-born youths in his kingdom, who possess the means, may be obliged to learn as long as they have to attend to no other business, until they can read English writing perfectly; and then let those who are dedicated to learning and the service of the Church be instructed in Latin." Alfred had made many efforts at self-instruction when

Alfred's  
Manual.

he selected Asser as his tutor. He could read, but it is doubtful whether he could write with his own hand. "One day," says Asser, "as we were both sitting in the royal chamber, conversing in the usual manner, it happened that I mentioned to him a passage out of some book. After listening with eager attention and following me with great curiosity, he hastily took out the little book which he was in the habit of carrying with him perpetually, and in which the daily lessons, psalms, and prayers were inscribed, which he had been accustomed to read in his youth, and requested that I would insert the quotation in the book." Asser prepared to write, but, finding the book everywhere filled with notes already made, suggested the beginning of a separate collection of the passages that pleased the King. "That is a good thought," said Alfred. A quaternian, of four pieces of vellum doubled together, so that each made two leaves, or the whole made sixteen pages—then the usual form of the sheet of a book—was at once arranged, the passage entered, and before the end of the same day three other extracts had been added to it. The book grew at last to the bulk of a Psalter, and was called by the King his Manual. It was known in the middle of the twelfth century, but no MS. copy of it has been found. Fragments that have been quoted, especially by William of Malmesbury, show that it must have contained, besides passages from Latin authors, the King's original notes on the early history of his own house and of his people, and, so far, his only original work; for all King Alfred's works that remain to us are translations, never literal, sometimes, indeed, with important additions, and usually coloured or varied more or less into harmony with his own mind and his practical and religious Anglo-Saxon purpose of diffusing useful knowledge.

The most popular of these was his translation of Boëthius "On the Consolation of Philosophy," which is preserved in

two old manuscripts.<sup>1</sup> Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boëthius, a Roman patrician, who was born between the year 470 and 475, and whose father, Consul in the year 487, died during his youth, attained to the consulship himself in the year 508 or 510, at which time he was occupying himself with a Commentary on the Predicaments of Aristotle. He held also at Rome some other office of note in association with an evil-disposed colleague named Decoratus. He married Rusticana, the daughter of the Consular Symmachus, and his two sons were both named early to the consulship. Boëthius, distinguished for his learning, obtained high confidence from the Emperor Theodoric, and used it for protection and assurance of the liberties of Rome. He resisted the oppressions of the strong men of the court, the injustice of Conigastus, and of the major-domo Triguilla, and made himself hated by the avaricious tribe of the young courtiers whom he opposed. He translated and wrote commentaries upon all Aristotle's works, translated and edited also Plato, Euclid, and Nicomachus. It was afterwards maintained that as a Christian he entered fiercely into controversies on behalf of the Roman see, and was especially vigorous against the Arians. This opinion, which appears in the opening of King Alfred's introduction to his translation, helped to give popularity to the name of Boëthius among churchmen, who seem to have used his *Consolation of Philosophy* as a school-book in their monasteries. The story went, as given by King Alfred, that Boëthius "observed the manifold evil which the King Theodoric did against Christendom and against the Roman senators. He then called to mind the ancient rights which they had under the Cæsars, their ancient lords. Then began he to inquire and study in himself how he might take the kingdom from the unrighteous king, and bring it under the power of the faithful and righteous men. He therefore privately sent letters to the Cæsar (Justinus) at Constantinople, which is the chief city of the Greeks and their king's dwelling-place, because the Cæsar was of the kin of their ancient lords. They prayed him that he would succour them with respect to their Christianity

<sup>1</sup> In the Cotton Library, Otho A. VI. Sec. X. In the Bodleian, MS. 180, Sec. XII.

and their ancient rights. When the cruel King Theodoric discovered this, he gave orders to take him to prison, and there lock up." This was the Church tradition. But the truth seems to be that Boëthius lived and died a heathen philosopher, and that the writings against the Arians ascribed to him are by another hand. He himself states as the sole reason of his imprisonment his increasing influence in the state, and his zeal to advance the freedom and dignity of the senate, which had made the courtiers angry and the King suspicious. A senator, Albinus, having been accused of *lèse Majesté*, Boëthius hurried to Theodoric, who was at Verona, and at his own peril maintained before him the cause of the senators. His enemies being then embittered, three courtiers, Caudentius, Ossilio, and Basilus—two of whom were themselves condemned to banishment—accused Boëthius of treasonable ambition, and produced forged letters dilating on a hope that the old freedom of Rome would be recovered.<sup>1</sup> The property of Boëthius was confiscated; he was deprived of his dignities, and sentenced, without hearing, to a banishment of forty miles from Rome. Then followed the long imprisonment, during which he wrote his Consolation, not of Christian hope, but of Philosophy, speaking to him through Wisdom and Reason. He was executed about the year 525, and Procopius tells how his widow Rusticana was reduced to beggary, and the Emperor Theodoric repented of his judicial murder. The clergy, having used the name of Boëthius to give weight to controversial writing, justified the popularity among themselves of his five books of the Consolation of Philosophy, in prose mingled with verse, by canonizing him as a saint in the eighth century, and assigning the 23rd of October as the day of his martyrdom.

But although the work was not that of a Christian, it was indeed worthy of honour among Christians. It was the masterpiece of the last man of genius produced by ancient Rome. Boëthius recognised in its first book the wisdom of the God who rules the world, as the great source of consolation; in the second

<sup>1</sup> This account, given by Boëthius himself, is sustained by the evidence of Procopius (lib. i.); but what the Church of Rome taught on the subject in King Alfred's time is still commonly credited.

book, that man in his worst misfortunes still possesses much, and that he should fix his mind on the imperishable; in the third book, that God is the chief good, and can work no evil; in the fourth book, that, as seen from above, only the good are strong and happy while the evil suffer and are weak—also that we should count none happy or unhappy till we see the end; while the fifth book reconciled the relation between God's knowledge of what is necessary with the free will of mankind. This question of Providence and Will was apparently derived by Boëthius from philosophical study of the Christian teaching at Rome, and so grafted on his Platonism. Of the legend that makes him a Christian, it is enough to observe that in this work, from the depth of worldly calamity, he turns to explore all sources of true consolation, and does not name Christ.

Both of the great esteem in which the Consolation of Boëthius was held by the Church of the middle ages, and of the great influence of the monastic schools, Dr. Pauli finds evidence in the fact, that "as soon as a newly-formed language began to produce, we meet with a version of Boëthius in it; this is also the case with all the most ancient remains of the old High Germans, the Provençals, and the Northern French; even Chaucer formed himself upon it when he gave England its language. It was presented to the Anglo-Saxons by their best prose writer, their King himself." Of the King's treatment of his author's text when his own heart was moved to utterance, the most famous example is that in which he thus expands one sentence of Boëthius: <sup>1</sup>—

"The mind then answered and thus said: O Reason, indeed thou knowest that covetousness, and the greatness of this earthly power, never well pleased me, nor did I very much yearn after this earthly authority. But nevertheless I was desirous of materials for the work which I was commanded to perform; that was, that I might honourably and fitly guide and exercise the power which was committed to me. Moreover, thou knowest that no man can show any skill, or exercise or control any power, without tools and materials. There are of every craft the materials without which man cannot exercise the craft. These, then, are a king's material and his tools to reign with; that he have his land well peopled; he must have head-men, and soldiers, and work-

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<sup>1</sup> The original sentence is, "Tum ego, Scis, inquam, ipsa minimum nobis ambitionem mortalium rerum fuisse dominatam: sed materiam gerendis rebus optavimus, quo ne virtus tacita consenescret." Lib. ii. Opening Prose 7.



men. Thou knowest that without these tools no king can show his craft. This is also his material that he must have beside the tools; provision for the three classes. This is, then, their provision; land to inhabit, and gifts and weapons, and meat and ale, and clothes, and whatsoever is necessary for the three classes. He cannot without these preserve the tools, nor without the tools accomplish any of those things which he is commanded to perform. Therefore I was desirous of materials wherewith to exercise the power, that my talents and fame should not be forgotten and hidden. For every craft and every power soon becomes old, and is passed over in silence, if it be without wisdom; for no man can accomplish any craft without wisdom. Because whatsoever is done through folly, no one can ever reckon for craft. This is now especially to be said, that I wished to live honourably whilst I lived, and after my life to leave to the men who were after me my memory in good works."<sup>1</sup>

There is some reason to doubt King Alfred's authorship of the metrical version of the pieces of Latin verse introduced by Boëthius among his prose, the *Metra* of Boëthius. Three of them are left as first translated into prose, while Alfred's preface, and even the prose of his first chapter, seem to have been needlessly versified.

Another of King Alfred's labours for the enlightenment of his countrymen was a translation of the *Universal History of Orosius*, from the Creation to the year A.D. 416. Alfred's Orosius. This book had long been in common and high repute by the familiar name of 'Orosius' among students and teachers in the monasteries; and it retained its credit, so that, after the invention of printing, it was one of the first works put into type, and appeared in numerous editions. The author was a Spanish Christian of the fifth century. Born at Tarragona and educated in Spain, he crossed over to Africa about the year 414, and received instruction from St. Augustine upon knotty questions of the origin of the soul and other matters. In Augustine's works are contained the "Consultation of Orosius with Augustine on the Error of the Priscillianists and Origenists," and a letter from Augustine to Orosius against them. Augustine sent Orosius to consult Jerome, who was in Palestine; and in his letter of introduction, said, "Behold, there has come to me

<sup>1</sup> From the translation of Alfred's Boëthius, by the Rev. S. Fox, in vol. iii. (and last) of the Jubilee edition of 'The Whole Works of King Alfred the Great: with Preliminary Essays Illustrative of the History, Arts, and Manners of the Ninth Century.' Oxford and Cambridge, 1852.

a religious young man, in catholic peace a brother, in age a son, in rank a co-presbyter, Orosius—of active talents, ready eloquence, ardent application, longing to be, in God's house, a vessel useful for disproving false and destructive doctrines, which have killed the souls of Spaniards much more grievously than the barbarian sword their bodies." In Palestine, towards the latter half of the year 415, Orosius attacked the Pelagians by writing against them a treatise on Free Will, and presenting a memorial against them to the Council of Diospolis. It was at the request of St. Augustine that Orosius wrote his History. The sack of Rome by Alaric having caused the Christians of Rome to doubt the efficacy of their faith, Augustine, while he himself wrote his 'De Civitate Dei' to show from the history of the Church that the preaching of the Gospel could not augment the world's misery, incited Orosius to show the same thing in a compendium of profane history also. Orosius began his work in the year 410, when Augustine had got through ten books of his, and he finished it about the year 416. Like a good old-fashioned controversialist he made very light of the argument of terror from the sack of Rome by Alaric, so representing the event that King Alfred, in his translation, thus abridged the detail:—

"Alaric, the most Christian and the mildest of kings, sacked Rome with so little violence, that he ordered no man should be slain, and that nothing should be taken away or injured that was in the churches. Soon after that, on the third day, they went out of the city of their own accord. There was not a single house burnt by their order."

In translating and adapting this book to the uses of his time King Alfred did not trouble himself at all with its old ecclesiastical character, as what Pope Gelasius I. had called a book written "with wonderful brevity against heathen perversions." Looking to it exclusively as a digest of historical and geographical information, Alfred abridged, omitted, imitated, added, with a single regard to his purpose of producing a text-book of that class of knowledge. Omitting the end of the fifth book and the beginning of the sixth, and so running two books into one, he made the next and last book the sixth instead of the seventh, as it is in the original.

The history of Orosius itself is bald, confused, but it was en-

riched and improved by Alfred's addition to the first book of much new matter, enlarging knowledge of the geography of Europe, which he calls Germania, north of the Rhine and Danube. Alfred adds also to the same book geographical narratives taken from the lips of two travellers. One was Ohthere, a Norwegian, who sailed from Halgoland on the coast of Norway, round the North Cape into the White Sea, and afterwards made a second voyage from Halgoland to the Bay of Christiana, and thence to Slesvig. The other traveller was Wulfstan, who sailed in the Baltic, from Slesvig in Denmark to Truso in Prussia. These voyages were taken from the travellers' own lips. Of Wulfstan's, the narrative passes at one time into the form of direct personal narration—"Wulfstan said that he went . . . that he had . . . And then we had on our left the land of the Burgundians [Bornholmians], who have their own king. After the land of the Burgundians we had on our left," &c. The narrative of the other voyage opens with the sentence, "Ohthere told his lord, King Alfred."<sup>1</sup> These three additions to Orosius—the Description of Europe, the two voyages of Ohthere, and the voyage of Wulfstan—may be considered Alfred's own works.

The Description is the King's own account of Europe in his time, and the only authentic record of the Germanic nations, written by a contemporary, so early as the ninth century.

Ohthere was a man of great wealth and influence in Norway as wealth was there reckoned; for he had 600 reindeer, including 6 decoy-deer; but though accounted one of the first men in the land, he had only 20 horned cattle, 20 sheep, and 20 swine. 'The little that he ploughed he ploughed with horses, and his chief revenue was in tribute of skin and bone from the

<sup>1</sup> 'A Description of Europe, and the Voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan, written in Anglo-Saxon by King Alfred the Great; with his account of the Mediterranean Islands, of Africa, and of the History of the World to the year B.C. MCCCCXIII., chiefly taken from Orosius; containing a fac-simile copy of the whole Anglo-Saxon text from the Cotton MS., and also from the first part of the Lauderdale MS.—a printed Anglo-Saxon Text, based upon these MSS., and a literal English Translation and Notes. By the Rev. Joseph Bosworth, D.D., &c.' London, 1855. The single objection to this very valuable work is that only fifty copies of it were printed. Dr. Bosworth has, however, since incorporated all his information in an admirable eight shilling edition for the general student of Alfred's Orosius. London, 1859.

**Finns.** The fame of his voyages attracted to him the attention of King Alfred. He said that he dwelt "Northmost of all northmen," in Halgoland; and wishing to find out how far the land lay due north, and whether any man dwelt north of him, —for the sake also of taking the walruses, "which have very good bone in their teeth; of these teeth they brought some to the King; and their hides are very good for ship-ropes,"—he sailed northward. Ohthere may have obtained some of his wealth by whale-fishing. He says that "in his own country is the best whale-hunting; they are eight-and-forty ells long, and the largest fifty ells long;" of these he said "that he was one of six who killed sixty in two days;" meaning, no doubt, that his vessel was one of six. The northward voyage he describes was by the coast of Norway, and round the North Cape into the White Sea. He relates only what he saw. "The Biarinians," he says, "told him many stories both about their own land and about the countries which were around them, but he knew not what was true, because he did not see it himself." Ohthere's second voyage was to the south, along the west and south coast of Norway to the Bay of Christiana, thence to Slesvig.

Wulfstan was perhaps a Jutlander, and his voyage was confined to the Baltic. Neither his account, nor that of Ohthere, contradicts the opinion then held, that Scandinavia was a large island, and the Gulf of Bothnia or Cwæner Lake flowed into the North Sea. From Wulfstan we have the following particulars of the way of life and burial among the Esthonians:—

" *Wulfstan's Account of the Esthonians.*

"Esthonia is very large, and there are many towns, and in every town there is a king. There is also very much honey and fishing. The king and the richest men drink mare's milk, but the poor and the slaves drink mead. There is very much war among them; and there is no ale brewed by the Esthonians, but there is mead enough. There is also a custom with the Esthonians, that when a man is dead he lies in his house, unburnt, with his kindred and friends a month—sometimes two; and the king and other men of high rank, so much longer according to their wealth, remain unburnt sometimes half a year, and lie above ground in their houses. All the while the body is within, there must be drinking and sports to the day on which he is burnt.

"Then, the same day, when they wish to bear him to the pile, they divide his property which is left after the drinking and sports, into five or six parts, sometimes into more, as the amount of his property may be. Then they lay

the largest part of it within one mile from the town, then another, then the third, till it is all laid, within the one mile, and the least part shall be nearest the town in which the dead man lies. All the men who have the swiftest horses in the land shall then be assembled about five or six miles from the property. Then they all run towards the property, and the man who has the swiftest horse comes to the first and largest part, and so each after the other, till it is all taken; and he takes the least part who runs to the property nearest the town. Then each rides away with the property and may keep it all; and, therefore, swift horses are there uncommonly dear. When his property is thus all spent, then they carry him out, and burn him with his weapons and clothes. Most commonly they spend all his wealth with the long lying of the dead within, and what they lay in the way, which the strangers run for, and take away.

"It is also a custom with the Esthonians that there men of every tribe must be burned; and if any one find a single bone unburnt, they shall make a great atonement. There is also among the Esthonians a power of producing cold, and therefore the dead lie there so long and decay not, because they bring the cold upon them; and if a man set two vats full of ale or of water, they cause that either shall be frozen over, whether it be summer or winter."

This is the only full detail of manners in King Alfred's usually condensed geographical digest.<sup>1</sup>

To his English version of the general history of Orosius, Alfred added a translation into the native tongue of what was incomparably the best history of his own country extant, the Ecclesiastical History, which, as the reader has seen, is, in fact, also a general political history, of Bede.

Alfred's  
Bede.

<sup>1</sup> The MSS. of Orosius are the Lauderdale, written in the end of the ninth century, and the Cotton, which Dr. Bosworth thinks is a copy from the Lauderdale, in the tenth. The Lauderdale MS. has been described by Dr. Bosworth in a short history, of which only 24 copies were printed for private circulation, but of which the substance is included in the introduction to his student's edition of Orosius. It is named after its former possessor, the Duke of Lauderdale, the royalist, who was taken prisoner at the battle of Worcester in 1651, and became Secretary of State, President of the Council, High Commissioner of Scotland, and (in 1672) Duke of Lauderdale, after the Restoration. In 1677 Dr. George Hickes, the chief student of Anglo-Saxon and northern languages in his day, went with Lauderdale to Scotland as his chaplain; and in 1688 Hickes first included in a catalogue of Anglo-Saxon MSS. the Lauderdale Orosius, mentioning incidentally that it was formerly the property of Dr. John Dee, the astrologer. Dee spent 3000*l.* on MSS., and died poor, "enforced many times to sell some book or other to buy his dinner with." In Wanley's Catalogue Hickes's title of Lauderdale MS. is preserved. The Duke of Lauderdale married into the family of Tollemache, and the present owner of the MS. is John Tollemache, Esq., of Helmingham Hall, Suffolk.

The King's name does not occur in the translation, and there is no introduction written by him. But Archbishop Ælfrie and William of Malmesbury both assign the translation to King Alfred; and the adoption of a mistranslation—Maximus imperator creatus est, the Emperor was born—shows that the compilers of the Saxon Chronicle, soon after the year 890, read Bede in this Anglo-Saxon version. In translating Bede, Alfred, as usual, regarded only his own purpose; and, as he wrote for his own people, he omitted details about the church affairs of the Scots and the church of York, documents also and letters of bishops and popes, but he did not omit a word from the history of the first Christian kings of Wessex. It is remarkable, however, and almost discredits his authorship of the translation, that he does not add a fact from his own fuller knowledge of the history of the country over which he ruled.

Alfred's other translations were theological. Pope Gregory the Great was, in and before his day, a favourite writer; his influence indeed was considerable upon much early religious literature. At the beginning of his Pontificate, when reproached with having wished to escape by flight from his election to the papal see, he wrote the 'Regula Pastoralis,' collecting many things scattered in different places through his works, to show what the mind of a true spiritual pastor ought to be. The reformatory synods under Charlemagne adopted this book as the law of their proceedings for improvement of the ecclesiastical profession, and King Alfred translated it for England as Gregory's Book on the Care of the Soul. The translation was made at some time after the year 890, aided, the King says, not only by Asser, Grimbold, and John, but also by his Archbishop Plegmund. This is the most literal of his translations; and it is in the preface to it that Alfred sets forth the decay of learning in his kingdom, and his desire for its true restoration. The preface is followed by a poetical introduction; and a metrical appendix to the book also agrees with the purport of the preface. At the request of Alfred, Werfrith, bishop of Worcester, translated also an abridgment of the popular 'Dialogues' of Gregory with his friend Deacon Peter, setting forth the legends of Italian saints, and giving its first shape to the doctrine of Purgatory.

Gregory's  
book of the  
Care of the  
Soul.

Gregory's  
Dialogues.

An Anglo-Saxon translation and abridgment of St. Augustine's Soliloquies, written before he was a great controversialist, in which Reason speaks to him as she spoke to Boëthius, and treats of salvation by faith, hope, charity, and striving after truth, is known as 'The Anglo-Saxon Anthology,' of which the only MS.,<sup>1</sup> torn and defective, ends with the words, "here end the sayings that King Alfred chose from the books which we call ——." There is no reference elsewhere to this as one of Alfred's works; and the assertion of the copyist is doubted.

Many works not Alfred's were ascribed to him; among them a book of Proverbs, of which Alfred is the hero, setting forth how at Seaford, at an assembly of bishops, scholars, earls, and knights, King Alfred, the Shepherd and Darling of England, presided, and uttered in detached sentences a series of proverbial admonitions, which are given, each with the prefix of "Thus sayeth Alfred." In the thirtieth section he addresses proverbs to his son, who is not named. The book probably belongs to the twelfth century, and was popular during the middle ages, not only in England but also in other Germanic countries. There were ascribed to him also translations of the Parables and of the Fables of Æsop; and there is an unsubstantial late tradition that he wrote a treatise upon Hawking, founded probably on Asser's statement that he took pains to establish and support falconers and fowlers of all kinds.

With very much more probability has been ascribed to King Alfred and his counsellor Plegmund the substantial establishment of that record of national history known as the Saxon or Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. There are several manuscripts of the Chronicle. The earliest<sup>2</sup> ends with year 891; is in the handwriting of the ninth century; and may be the original from which entries were supplied to monasteries in which expert scribes multiplied copies of the record. The narrative becomes full after the year 853, or soon after the date of Alfred's birth. It is also stated in the old French chronicle of Geoffrey Gaimar, written in the twelfth century, that King

<sup>1</sup> MS. Cotton, Vitellius, A. 15.

<sup>2</sup> In Corpus Christi Coll. Cam., S. xi.

Alfred had at Winchester a copy of a chronicle fastened by a chain, so that all who wished might read. Asser also incorporates much of the matter of the Chronicle from the years 849 to 887, in his *Life of Alfred*.

The Chronicle, which begins, after a brief account of Britain, with Cæsar's invasion, was continued to the accession of Henry II., in the year 1154, and shares with Bede's *History* the first place among authorities for early English history. The extant copies are all evidently based upon a single text; but there is no record of the source of this. It can only be conjectured that from monasteries in different parts of England local annals were sent to the monastic head-quarters of a national historiographer, who at the end of each year compiled a short summary of its history. Of the text of this summary copies were probably made by his brethren for distribution among other religious houses; and thus every possessor of the Chronicle might add to it year by year, in an authenticated form, each year's instalment of the story of the nation. Interpolations occur, especially in one of the latest and most careless of the seven extant copies;<sup>1</sup> but as a rule, from Alfred's time downwards, the entries are contemporary; although it is not until some time after the Conquest that they begin to show any variations in the Anglo-Saxon tongue. The later entries, however, very strongly indicate the breaking up of the pure Anglo-Saxon.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Cotton MSS. Domitian A. viii. 2, written almost wholly in the middle of the 12th century.

<sup>2</sup> The texts of all the MSS. are given entire in the edition of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, recently published in the series of *Chronicles and Memorials* published under the Direction of the Master of the Rolls. "The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, according to the several original authorities. Edited with a Translation by Benjamin Thorpe. Vol. I. Original Texts. Vol. II. Translation." London, 1861. This is now the standard edition. The Chronicle was first published at Cambridge, in folio, from collation of two MSS. in Anglo-Saxon, with a Latin translation by Abraham Wheloc, in 1644. It was next edited in 1692, at Oxford, by Edmund Gibson, afterwards Bishop of London, from collation with three other MSS., and with a new Latin translation, preface, notes, and indexes. In 1823 the Rev. James Ingram, B.D., afterwards President of Trin. Coll. Oxford, published a text enlarged by collation of all the known MSS., with an English translation, preface, notes, indexes, and brief grammar of Anglo-Saxon. An edition of the Chronicle down to the Norman Conquest, with an English translation, by the late Mr. Richard Price, was



King Alfred died on the 28th of October, 901, at the age of fifty-three, after a reign of twenty-nine years and six months.<sup>1</sup>

The authenticity of Bishop Asser's Life of Alfred has been altogether denied by Mr. Thomas Wright,<sup>2</sup> and chiefly upon the following grounds: that his account of himself and of the manner of his coming to Alfred's court is improbable; that the writing of such a work by Asser in the vigour of the King's lifetime—when he was in his forty-fifth year—appears strange; that internal evidence shows the book to be a compound of history and legend. The Life consists of two parts: 1, a historical chronicle from 851 to 887, corresponding with the Saxon Chronicle for those years, which probably, says Mr. Wright, was not in existence till long after Alfred's death; 2, a few personal anecdotes of Alfred grafted on the Chronicle at the years 866 and 884, but without particular reference to them, at the conclusion. The chronological entries cease at the year 887, although the author says that he was writing in 893. The interpolated stories, it is argued, are legends that could not have been written in Alfred's time. There are inconsistencies. In one part Alfred is said to have been cured of his painful disease by prayer to St. Neot, at the age of forty; in a later page it is said that he continued to be subject to it in his forty-fifth year, at the time of writing. It is further argued that there

published in folio by royal authority, in 1848, among the Monumenta Historica Britannica. Of the MSS. the oldest, already cited, is at Cambridge; one that belonged formerly to Peterborough is in the Bodleian (Laud. 636), and the rest are all among the Cotton MSS. of the British Museum (Tib. A. vi., Tib. B. i., Tib. B. iv., Tib. A. iii.,—a single leaf, Dom. A. vii. 2, and Otho B. xi. 2).

<sup>1</sup> The life of King Alfred should be read by help of his German biographer, Dr. Reinhold Pauli, whose book has been twice translated into English. There is 'The Life of King Alfred, by Dr. Reinhold Pauli. A Translation revised by the author. Edited by Thomas Wright.' London, 1852; and there is, as a volume of Bohn's Antiquarian Library, 'The Life of Alfred the Great, Translated from the German of Dr. R. Pauli. To which is appended Alfred's Anglo-Saxon version of Orosius, with a literal English Translation, and an Anglo-Saxon Alphabet and Glossary, by B. Thorpe.' London, 1853. This cheap volume is valuable to the student, because it not only contains, with a translation, the Anglo-Saxon text of Alfred's Orosius, but it has the now rare merit of giving the text in the old letters with which it is desirable to become familiar. There is also a digest of A.-S. grammar and a glossary, so that the whole forms a very useful text-book for the learner.

<sup>2</sup> 'Biog. Brit. Lit.' pp. 405-412.

has been evident use of a *Life of St. Neot*, which there is reason for believing was not written until 974. Another work, compiled from the *Saxon Chronicle*, is called the *Chronicle of St. Neot's*, which has also been called *Asser's Annals*; this work and the *Life of Alfred* were, Mr. Wright thinks, both written by a monk of *St. Neot's* about the end of the tenth century. By this later writer he believes that the *Life of Alfred* was constructed out of current tradition, the *Saxon Chronicle* and legends in the *Life of St. Neot*. The *St. Neot* mentioned in this argument was a kinsman of King *Alfred's*, who, first bred to arms, renounced the world, taught at *Glastonbury*, visited *Rome*, desiring pious solitude became a hermit in the woods of *Cornwall*, after seven years visited the Pope again, returned to his hermitage, converted it into a small monastic house, of which he was the first abbot, where also he is said to have been sometimes visited by *Alfred*, and died in 877. In 974 his bones were carried to the newly-founded monastery of *St. Neot's*, *Huntingdonshire*, and after this date his *Life* was written.

Dr. Pauli represents the best form of more prevalent opinion, in arguing that the *Life* we have is *Asser's* work, with interpolations. There is no good MS. of *Asser's Life of Alfred*; the most ancient, which was of the tenth century, was burnt in the fire at the Cotton library. But nine years before that fire, which occurred in 1731, *Wise's* edition of *Asser* was published with collations of the original. From this, Dr. Pauli argues, we learn that the early MS. did not contain those passages, found in the others, which have been most strongly suspected. These have been taken from the *St. Neot's Chronicle*, or *Annals of Asser*, a bad compilation from the *Saxon Chronicle*, joined to legends totally at variance with history. Such additions, it is observed, found their way into the MS., which was completed very late in the sixteenth century, and by neglect or design was admitted into *Archbishop Parker's* edition of 1574. Thus it is that the contents of the edition of the tenth century are known to us only from the criticism of *Wise*.

Again, argues Dr. Pauli, it is known that *Florence of Worcester* introduced the larger part of *Asser's* biography into his *Chronicle*. The *Chronicle* agrees with the biography word for word, *Asser* not being once mentioned as the authority. Did *Florence* entirely

follow Asser, or in the annalistic part did he and Asser both follow the Saxon Chronicle? Asser, when writing the life of the King in 893, could consult the Chronicles as far as the year 890: his annalistic part extends, in fact, to the year 887. Dr. Pauli then points out that of the biographical details in Asser, which are episodes of various lengths and imperfect in many places, there are some which Florence repeats partly word for word, omitting the introductory phrases and now and then shortening his text towards the end. Thus are to be found repeated, as parts of the original biography, the relation of Alfred's descent; of his youth and desire for learning; his marriage; his bodily infirmities and family; detail of the learned men at his Court; Asser's own position with the King; Alfred's studies, illness, cares of state, religious foundations, love of justice. But there are not to be found the later legends, of Alfred's ship-building in 877, of his residence with the cowherd at Athelney, and, of course, there is nothing about the origin of the University of Oxford. Dr. Pauli adds to his argument, of which I have given only the main points, that the frequently-recurring addition of the Celtic names of different places to the Saxon and Latin names,<sup>1</sup> make it evident that a Briton—and who else could it be but Asser of Wales?—wrote the original work.

<sup>1</sup> Asser, with readers at St. David's in his mind, writes, "Thornsætas were called Durngueis," "Eaxanceastre was called Cairwise," "Selwudu, silvamagna, Coit maur," &c.

## CHAPTER XII.

CHARLEMANNE's effort to inform with knowledge the rough vigour of an untamed people was more hopeful than <sup>Knowledge abroad.</sup> that of Alfred, when he laboured to restore a scholarship already fallen to decay. But, after all, the chief labour of Alfred was not so much to restore as to distribute. There was an end of the feast of learning. The wild Northmen had broken up the tables and dispersed the company; but there remained the meats on which they had been feasting, and the most substantial of these Alfred, having gathered up, was diligent in labour to divide among his people. To this end tended his work as a translator of good knowledge out of Latin into the common tongue, and if he could do little towards the restoration of a lettered Church, he did much towards the formation of a more instructed laity. There was after Alfred's time more breadth of culture in the sturdy and right-minded race that not long afterwards looked back to him as England's Darling, though the days were gone that had produced an Anglo-Saxon Cadmon. Public intelligence advanced, while from causes within itself the Church, as an exponent of the nation's mind, lost power.

For whatever hope there might have been of a recovery of the old free intellectual energy within the Church was soon destroyed by the predominant energy of Dunstan, who with his friend Ethelwold—two men of equal age, firm fellow-labourers—gave Church reform a fatal twist towards the narrowest monasticism of the Benedictine Rule.

Ethelwold, who has been called the Father of Monks, was born in the reign of Edward the Elder; therefore, not <sup>Nipping Monasticism.</sup> later than the year 925. He was a favourite of King <sup>Ethelwold.</sup> Athelstane, and was ordained priest at the same time as Dunstan. When Dunstan, A.D. 947, became at the age of two-and-twenty abbot of Glastonbury, Ethelwold became a monk in his establishment. Afterwards, to prevent Ethelwold from carrying his zeal

and learning into France, the small ruined abbey of Abingdon was given to him, with lands and gifts for its re-establishment. The new abbey was completed in the year 950, and three years afterwards its abbot was consecrated Bishop of Winchester by Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury. Ethelwold then turned out of the monasteries the secular priests, who, like the English clergy of the present day, lived under no rule of celibacy, and introduced in their place monks from Glastonbury and Abingdon, then the sole centres of the strict monastic rule. He was the zealous establisher of a nipping monasticism, and a great builder of churches. He bought and rebuilt the ruins of Medeshamstead, since called Peterborough, Thorney and Ely Nunnery, and he rebuilt Winchester Cathedral, which was then consecrated by Dunstan to St. Swithun in the presence of King Ethelred and of nine bishops.

Translation of the bones of saints, and the ascribing of miracles to their shrines, were at this time means vigorously used for uniting the people strongly to the Church. Legends of Swithun. Legendary histories of saints became common, and there has lately been published an interesting Anglo-Saxon fragment of a string of Legends, setting forth why Ethelwold, having translated the bones of Swithun, dedicated to him the new Minster, which remained dedicated to that saint until Henry VIII. ordered the name of the Holy Trinity to be substituted. Used as waste parchment, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in binding a Register for the Chapter Library at Gloucester, six leaves of tenth century manuscript were set aside more than thirty years ago by a minor canon and a librarian, to be shown to Mr. Sharon Turner when he came, as he did once a-year, that way. They were pronounced by him to be portions of an Anglo-Saxon Homily or Homilies. The leaves were put aside and lost for a time, but re-discovered as loose leaves in a thin portfolio when in 1860 the British Association met at Gloucester. They were then examined and described by the Rev. John Earle, late Oxford Professor of Anglo-Saxon, and edited by him next year for publication, both in facsimile as photozincographs, and with the text printed in modern letters, translated literally, annotated and provided with an Essay on St. Swithun. Three of the six leaves refer to the story of St. Maria Egyptiaca, and do not especially

concern this narrative ; the other three are two fragments of the legends that were officially collected by the bishop, with his secretary sitting by, even the learned Landferth, from over the sea, who wrote it down in Latin.<sup>1</sup>

When a full case had been made out, by evidence of miracles, it was laid before the fortunate King Edgar, who ordered that the translation should take place with proper pomp ; and Swithun, who had been more than a century earlier Ethelwolf's predecessor as Bishop of Winchester between the years 852 and 862, was removed from the burial-place he had chosen for himself on the north side of his old church of Peter and Paul, in the ground between that and the fine wooden belfry he had built. Matthew of Westminster says that Bishop Swithun "ordered his household that they should inter his corpse outside the church, where the feet of passengers and the droppings from the eaves would beat upon it." But when the translation was desired by Ethelwold, the saint—as the newly-published Anglo-Saxon fragment tells us—appeared in a dream to a decrepit old smith and bade him go to a priest of Swithun's kin, named Eadsige, who had been ejected with others from Oldminster by Bishop Ethelwold, and was then settled at Winchilcombe. The smith was to bid Eadsige go to Bishop Ethelwold, asking that he would himself open Swithun's burial-place and bring his bones to the new church. The smith, it is said, being unwilling to act on the prompting of a dream, was thrice exhorted, and told that for a sign the iron ring in the stone over Swithun's tomb would be found to give way at the first tug. The smith tried the ring timidly, and it came out of the stone as if the stone were sand. He put it back, trod it down, and it held tight again. Eadsige, who had until then shunned Ethelwold and his monks, returned within two years to the Minster, and remained in it until his death. A hump-backed man lost at the holy grave his hump. A sick man, carried to the burial-place, watched there till near

<sup>1</sup> 'Gloucester Fragments. 1. Fac-simile of some Leaves in Saxon Hand-writing on Saint Swithun, copied by Photozincography at the Ordnance Survey Office, Southampton, and published with Elucidations and an Essay by John Earle, M.A., Rector of Swanswick, late Fellow and Tutor of Oriel College, and Professor of Anglo-Saxon in the University of Oxford.' London, 1861.

dawn. "Then he fell asleep, and the worshipful tomb, as seemed to them all, was all rocking. And to the sick man it seemed as if one of his shoes were being tugged from off his foot. And he suddenly awoke. He was then healed through the holy Swithun. And they sought the shoe very diligently ; but no man was able to find it there ever." The sick were healed at the rate of from three to eighteen a-day. It was not easy to get into the Minster for the press of diseased people in the burial-ground. Three blind women came from the Isle of Wight, with a dumb boy for guide. The women and the boy were healed. "The old church was all hung around with crutches, and with cripples' stools from one end to the other, on either wall, of them that there were healed ; they could not, however, even so put up half of them . . . and we say, in sooth, that the time was happy and winsome in Angle-cyn, then when King Eadgar furthered Christendom and many monasteries were raised, and his kingdom was dwelling in peace." Of this sort was the case presented to the King in favour of translation, and to the people in favour of worship, within Ethelwold's newly-built church. It may be observed, in the passage just quoted out of the 'Gloucester Fragments,' that Eadgar's people, West-Saxons, are called Angle-cyn, Angles ; at the same time the four western counties of Cornwall, Devon, much of Somerset and Dorsetshire, unwillingly dependent upon Wessex, were the Wealh-cyn (Stranger-race), or Welsh of the West—the country across the Severn being said to belong to the North Wealh-cyn or North Welsh.

Ethelwold had also a mechanical turn, which he applied, of course, with all his other powers to the main purpose of his life. He made "a certain wheel full of bells, which he called the golden wheel, on account of its being plated with gold. This he directed to be brought forward and turned round on feast days, to excite greater devotion."<sup>1</sup> A treatise of Ethelwold's is extant upon the squaring of the circle,<sup>2</sup> and in accordance with his chief and constant labour, he translated into Anglo-Saxon St. Bene-

<sup>1</sup> Regist. Abendon, in the Monasticon, here quoted through Mr. Wright's 'Biog. Brit. Lit.,' a work from which I take information about several minor writers.

<sup>2</sup> Bodleian MS. Digby, No. 83, fol. 24.

dict's Rule of a Monastic Life.<sup>1</sup> The Saxon Chronicle calls Ethelwold "the benevolent bishop." When there were famine and pestilence in his diocese, he caused the sacred vessels of his church to be broken up to feed the poor. He also made Winchester famous as a place of instruction, by the eager pleasure with which he was said to teach, and his good sense in reading to the pupils in their own tongue Latin books of information. Ethelwold died in the year 984, with his friend Dunstan sitting by his bed.

Dunstan, nephew of Athelm, Archbishop of Canterbury, and of Alfheh, Bishop of Winchester, was born near Glastonbury in the year 925. He was taught at Glaston-<sup>Dunstan.</sup>bury, received the tonsure there, and afterwards was presented at Canterbury by his uncle Athelm to King Athelstane. He lived for a time at Court, where he made friends and found enemies. He retired—a young man of eighteen or nineteen—to the house of the uncle who was Bishop of Winchester; fell passionately in love, and wished to marry; was opposed by exhortations to celibacy; took fever, and was told that the fever was a judgment on his passions; recovered, and shut himself up in a cell by the wall of Winchester Church, half sunk below the ground and hardly high enough to suffer him to stand upright. There he employed himself with study; wrote, illuminated; exercised his taste for mechanics, and worked at a little forge on metal work and vessels of the church. It was with the tongs used by young Dunstan at this forge that he is said to have taken the Devil by the nose and made him howl, so that he was heard for miles around. Probably Dunstan's belief in his temptations by the fiends, and his imagination of assaults of fiends, in the assaults of curs upon the highway, belonged to an insane side of his character. He soon had credit as a saint. Pilgrimages were made to the youth's cell. A rich widow settled down before it; when she died she left him all her property. While yet a youth, Dunstan was called from his cell to be one of King Edmund's counsellors. Edmund then made him Abbot of Glastonbury,

<sup>1</sup> A copy is in MS. Cotton Faustina, A. x. A compilation from it made by Aelfric for the monks of Eynesham, is among the MSS. of Corpus Christi Coll. Cambridge. No. 265.



and at once Dunstan went the way on which he was followed by his friend Ethelwold in turning out all married clergy, or clergy who desired to marry, and introducing the austere discipline of Benedict's ~~own~~, now four century old, Monte Cassino.

Dunstan was regarded by the later Anglo-Saxons as first abbot of true monks, and as founder at Glastonbury of the first truly monastic school. He still had his delusions as to persecution by the demons. After the accession of Edwig, whose fair wife Dunstan insulted and the revengeful Church afterwards seared and hamstrung, the monks were turned out and the secular clergy reinstated. Dunstan retired to the monastery—where Adelard, who afterwards wrote an extant eulogy of him,<sup>1</sup> was a monk—of St. Peter's at Ghent; but he was recalled by Edgar, then a boy of fourteen, upon the partition of the kingdom, and made Bishop of Worcester; also of London; afterwards—at the age of thirty-four—Edgar's principal minister; and, in 962, Archbishop of Canterbury at the age of thirty-eight, holding, together with the primacy, the two bishoprics of London and Rochester, and getting Winchester for his friend Ethelwold. Dunstan died at the age of sixty-four in the year 988. A Bodleian MS.<sup>2</sup> contains a picture of Dunstan on his knees worshipping Christ, with a scroll of prayer issuing from his mouth, and of this picture a very ancient note says that it was the work of Dunstan himself. He wrote, for the use of English monks, a modification of the Benedictine Rule, with an Anglo-Saxon interlinear version,<sup>3</sup> and also a large commentary on the Benedictine Rule,<sup>4</sup> probably containing the substance of the lectures on the Rule delivered in the early monastic schools of Glastonbury, Abingdon, and their offshoots.

Lantfred, one of the pupils of Ethelwold at Winchester, wrote an inflated book of Latin prose on the Posthumous Miracles of St. Swithun.<sup>5</sup> His fellow-pupil Wulfstan turned that book into Latin verse, and wrote also an extant Life of his master Ethelwold. Wulfstan was a singer at Win-

<sup>1</sup> MS. Cotton, Nero C. vii.

<sup>2</sup> NE. D. 2, 19.

<sup>3</sup> A MS. of it is in the Cotton Collection, Tiberius A. iii.

<sup>4</sup> MS. Reg. 10, A. xxi.

<sup>5</sup> In the Brit. Mus. MS., Reg. 15, C. vii., which contains also Wulfstan's metrical version.

chester, and William of Malmesbury says that he wrote also a practical work 'On the Harmony of Tones.'

Fabius Ethelwerd, the patrician, a descendant of King Ethelred, wrote a short Latin Chronicle, from the beginning of the world to the year 975, dedicated, in its <sup>Ethelwerd.</sup> Introduction, to his relative, Matilda, daughter of Emperor Otho, a "dearest sister, whose letter has been longed for and read with kisses." Matilda was daughter of an Editha, the sister of King Athelstane. In his Introduction Ethelwerd both gives and requests information upon royal descents and intermarriages. The Chronicle is very bald and in bad Latin, consisting usually of little more than memoranda, but comparatively full in treatment of the reigns of Ethelred and Alfred.

Bridferth, a mathematical monk, alive in 980, commented on Bede's scientific text-books, and wrote also a 'Life <sup>1034sqn.</sup> of Dunstan.'

Ælfrie or Ælfrie, sometimes called the Grammarian, the son of a Kentish Earl, was one of the first who entered the <sup>1010.</sup> monastic school of Ethelwold at Abingdon. When Ethelwold became Bishop of Winchester Ælfrie went with him, and was his chief helper in establishing the fame of Winchester as a place of instruction. Ælfrie, acting as chief Minister of Instruction in Ethelwold's diocese, wrote as a school-book his Latin Colloquies and a glossary in Latin and Anglo-Saxon that was printed at Oxford in the year 1659. For the instruction of all, Ælfrie translated also most of the books of the Old Testament into Anglo-Saxon. Afterwards he was removed to the abbey of Cerne in Dorsetshire, by the wish of its founder Ethelmer, at the request of whose son Ethelward Ælfrie compiled his Homilies, apparently between the years 990 and 991. At Ethelward's request also he began to translate Genesis into Anglo-Saxon, and continued until he had completed the whole Pentateuch and book of Job. He wrote also a Latin and Anglo-Saxon Grammar, two letters upon the Old and New Testament, and a Liturgy. Having been advanced to the bishopric of Wilton not very long before, in 995 Ælfrie became Archbishop of Canterbury. He had then to struggle against

<sup>1</sup> MS. Cotton Cleop. B. XIII.

the tumults caused by fresh irruptions of the Danes, and he died on the 16th of November, A.D. 1006.

Ælfric's Colloquy is best known as it was afterwards enlarged and republished by Ælfric Bata, who had been himself Ælfric's Colloquy. taught Latin by it at Winchester.<sup>1</sup> Latin being a spoken and written language in living use among the learned, though the study of it had then much decayed in England, it was taught conversationally; as now the modern languages are taught; and the form of dialogue was used for Latin school-books in order that some conversational power might be acquired more readily by the pupil. The plan of Ælfric's Colloquy is, by making the disciple, who begs to be taught, answer questions on his own occupation and the various trades of his companions, to introduce into a not very long lesson-book the Latin for the greatest possible number of words applicable to the different pursuits of common life. The short descriptions incidentally illustrate manners of the day, and among these the use of the rod to the pupil, whether it were to make him a good scholar or to fetch him out of bed for nocturns, has not been overlooked. As the Latin words have their meanings interlined in Anglo-Saxon, some Anglo-Saxon words are interpreted by help of this Colloquy.

Ælfric's Vocabulary, or glossary, is the oldest Latin-English Ælfric's Grammar and Vocabulary. Dictionary in existence. It is classified, not alphabetical: giving the Latin and Anglo-Saxon for farm-instruments; for ranks of men; for names of insects, birds, herbs, trees; names of drinking-vessels; kinds of drink, of clothing, of arms; of forms of boat or ship; of the winds; of colours, &c. The classification, however, is but imperfectly preserved. This glossary was usually appended to Ælfric's Anglo-Saxon translation from the Latin Grammars of Priscian and of Donatus, that teacher of St. Jerome who was the Lindley Murray of the mediæval schools. The Grammar was preceded by a Latin and an Anglo-Saxon preface, in which Ælfric complained of the low state of learning in England before its revival by Dunstan and Ethelwold.

<sup>1</sup> The MSS. of it are in the Cotton Collection, (Piberius A. iii. fol. 56) and in the Library of St. John's College, Oxford.

Ælfric's Homilies are compiled and translated from the Fathers, being a harmony of their opinions as the Anglo-Saxon Church accepted them, arranged, as to each topic, in the form of a separate and complete discourse, for the assurance of faith. They are in two sets, each of forty sermons; the first set was completed in the year 990, and published by the authority of Sigeric, then Archbishop of Canterbury; the second, compiled at the suggestion of Ethelward, commemorates the different saints revered by the Anglo-Saxon Church.<sup>1</sup> That on St. Gregory's Day was translated for Queen Anne by Mrs. Elizabeth Elstob, an Anglo-Saxon scholar, who died in 1756. Its speciality is, that it contains an account of the conversion of England. Mrs. Elstob proposed to print, with translations, Ælfric's Homilies, and actually printed in folio thirty-six pages, when the press was stopped by want of funds. One of the sermons of Ælfric, that upon Easter, from the Latin of Ratramnus, attracted great attention, more than six centuries later, during the controversy with the Church of Rome, by the opposition of its doctrine of the Sacrament to the Roman theory of Transubstantiation. It was then several times reprinted as "a Testimonie of Antiquitie showing the Auncient fayth in the Church of England touching the sacrament of the body and bloude of the Lord here publikely preached, and also receaved in the Saxon tyme, above 600 yeares ago;" and the text from Jeremiah was added (vi. 16), "Goe into the streetes, and inqyre for the olde way: and if it be the good and ryght way, then goe therein, that ye may finde rest for your soules. But they say: we will not walke therein."<sup>2</sup>

Ælfric wrote also a treatise on the Trinity, an abridgment of Ethelwold's 'Constitutions for the Monks of Eynsham,' and perhaps two sermons, one to the clergy and one to the people.

To the tenth century belong also a few remaining strains of

<sup>1</sup> See 'The Homilies of Ælfric, with an English Translation, by Benjamin Thorpe.' Printed for the Ælfric Society, in two volumes, 1843 and 1846.

<sup>2</sup> No date. A later tract, published at Aberdeen in 1825, gives 'Three Rare Monuments of Antiquitie, Bertram, Priest, a Frenchman (written 600 years ago); Ælfricus, Archbishop of Canterbury, an Englishman (written 887 years ago); and Marrik, Abbot, a Scotlaner (820 years ago). Translated and compacted by M. William Guild.' I abridge its title.

native Anglo-Saxon poetry. In the Saxon Chronicle, under the date 937, prose record for the first time gives place to verse in chronicling the famous battle fought at Brunanburh in Northumberland by Athelstane against the allied Scots and Danes. In the autumn of the year 934 Constantine the Second, King of Scotland, had attended a Witenagemot at Buckingham. Eogan (Owen), Constantine's nephew, was King in Strathclyde, and, after Constantine's return from Buckingham, he and Owen joined their forces against Athelstane, who marched northward and reduced them to submission. Athelstane's attention being then occupied by his interests in the affairs of France, Constantine planned a fresh attack, in concert with his son-in-law Olave Sitricson the Dane, Olave the Red, who, ousted by Athelstane from succession to the rule of Sitric his father in Danish Northumbria, had taken refuge in his Irish kingdom. Olave came back into the Humber with 615 ships, to join Owen of Strathclyde, his father-in-law Constantine, and Adills and Yring, British princes, who were gathering their forces for another struggle, for another battle of Cattraeth. Olave is said to have gone into Athelstane's camp disguised as a gleeman, and to have played while the king feasted, taking note meanwhile of his points of attack. But a soldier who had served under him saw Olave burying the minstrel's reward that he disdained to carry out, and warned the king to shift his camp. He did so, and in the evening Werstan Bishop of Sherborne, arriving with troops, camped on the ground Athelstane had quitted. Werstan was attacked in the night by Olave, and killed with all his attendants. Olave then directed his night attack to the king's new camping-ground, but was repulsed.<sup>1</sup> Two days afterwards the great battle was fought at Brunanburh, of which the unknown Saxon poet whose verse is inserted in the National Chronicle thus sang, after the manner of his fathers. With slight attention to the order of the words, a strictly literal translation will fall into English rhythm:—

“ *The Battle of Brunanburh*, AN. D.CCCC.LXXVII.

“This year King Athelstane, the Lord of Earls,  
Ring-giver to the warriors, Edmund too,

---

William of Malmesbury, ii. 6. The site of Brunanburh is not known.

His brother, won in fight with edge of swords  
 Life-long renown at Brunanburh, The sons  
 Of Edward clave with the forged steel the wall  
 Of linden shields. The spirit of their sires  
 Made them defenders of the land, its wealth,  
 Its homes, in many a fight with many a foe.  
 Low lay the Scottish foes, and death-doomed fell  
 The shipmen; the field streamed with warrior's blood,  
 When rose at morning tide the glorious star,  
 The sun, God's shining candle, until sank  
 The noble creature to its setting. There  
 Lay many a northern warrior, struck by darts  
 Shot from above the shield, and scattered wide  
 As fled the Scots, weary and sick of war.  
 Forth followed the West Saxons, in war bands  
 Tracking the hostile folk the livelong day.  
 With falchions newly-ground they hewed amain  
 Behind the men who fled. The hard hand-play  
 The Mercians refused to none who came,  
 Warriors with Olave, o'er the beating waves,  
 And, borne in the ship's bosom, came death-doomed  
 'To battle in that land. There lay five kings  
 Whom on the battle-field swords put to sleep,  
 And they were young; and seven of Olave's jarls,  
 With Scots and Mariners an untold host.  
 There the Prince of the Northmen fled, compelled  
 To seek with a small band his vessel's prow.  
 The bark drove from the shore, the king set sail,  
 And on the fallow flood preserved his life.  
 There fled the hoary chief, old Constantine;  
 Regaining his north country, not to boast  
 How falchions met. For on the trysting place,  
 Slain in the fight, his friends, his kinsmen lay;  
 And his son too, young to bear arms, he left,  
 Mangled with wounds, upon the slaughter-ground.  
 The warrior, grizzly-locked had not to boast,  
 The old deceiver, of the clash of bills.  
 Nor Olave more; nor any that were saved.  
 They could not laughing say that at the rush  
 Of banners, clash of weapons, meet of spears,  
 The tryst of men, they, on the battle-stead,  
 Were better in the works of war; that there  
 On the death-field they played with Edward's sons.

Then in their nailed ships on the stormy sea  
 The Northmen went, the leavings of red darts.  
 Through the deep water Dublin once again,  
 Ireland to seek, abased. Fame-bearing went  
 Meanwhile to their own land, West Saxon's land,  
 The brothers, King and Atheling. They left

The carcasses behind them to be shared  
 By livid kite, swart raven, horny beaked,  
 And the white eagle of the goodly plumes,  
 The greedy war-hawk and grey forest wolf,  
 Who ate the carrion.

Slaughter more than this  
 Was in this island never yet. Sword's edge  
 Never laid more men low, from what books tell,  
 Old chroniclers, since hither from the east  
 Angles and Saxons over the broad sea,  
 Looking for land sought Britain, proud war smiths  
 Who won the country from the conquered Welsh."

If the historiographer of the Saxons was not at this period himself a poet he was well inclined to verse. The  
Other Verse  
 of the Saxon  
 Chronicle. Chronicle breaks into rhyme again when the North-umbrians in 941—Athelstane having died the year before—defiantly gave Olave his inheritance; and in a few unpoetical lines it records that Athelstane's successor, Edmund, subdued Mercia and released from the Danes, the five towns, Leicester, Lincoln, Nottingham, Stamford, and Derby. Again, under the year 958, the date of the accession of Edgar, a poem celebrates his prosperous and peaceful reign, and his piety and wisdom, barring the one fault, that

"He loved foreign vices and brought heathen manners too fast within this land, and enticed hither outlandish men and allured pernicious people to this country. But may God grant him that his good deeds be more prevailing than his misdeeds, for his soul's protection upon the long journey."

Under the date 973, the fact that in the sixteenth year of his reign, and at the age of thirty, Edgar caused himself to be anointed King at Bath on the day of Pentecost, by Dunstan and Oswald, gives occasion for a metrical record, versifying names and dates and ages. There are two short poems in the Chronicle upon the Death of Edgar in 975. One of them takes ten lines to say that the day of his death was July 8. Thus: "Children of people name, Men on earth, The month everywhere, In this land, Those who grew while were, In the art of numbers, Rightly instructed, July month, When departed, On the eighth day, the young Edgar from life." With equal vivacity this writer tells in the same copy of verse that Cyneweard, Bishop of Wells, died ten nights before Edgar; that Edgar was succeeded by Edward; that the great Earl Osac was banished; and that

there was in the same year a comet. Another piece of verse inserted under this year in the Chronicle denounces the ealdorman Ælfhere, who destroyed Ethelwold's monasteries. A dozen lines expressing, under date 1002, the misery of a town taken by the Danes, complete the catalogue of scraps of verse inserted in the Chronicle. The one really good piece among them all is that on the Battle of Brunanburh; but the entry concerning Ælfhere and the monasteries leads us to the topic of another, and, with a single exception, the last relic of Anglo-Saxon poetry, the fragment which describes the death of Ealdorman Byrhtnoth at the battle of Maldon.

Byrhtnoth was a brave and pious ealdorman of the East Saxons, who, before his death, gave all his lands to the Church. He took the part of the Benedictines when, at the accession of Edgar's son Edward, the country was divided by faction for and against them, and Ælfhere, the ealdorman of Mercia, expelled them from the monasteries in his territory. Afterwards, in the year 994, and in the reign of Ethelred the Unready, when the Northmen under Justin and Guthmund attacked Ipswich and avenged a previous defeat by ravaging the country round about, Byrhtnoth, disdainfully challenged by them, fought with them at Maldon, in Essex, was defeated, and was himself killed in a battle, which to the King seemed so disastrous that the raising of money to buy peace from the Danes after this time first appeared as a recognised tax, under the name of Danegeld. This battle was the subject of an animated poem, of which there is still extant the copy of a fragment containing about six hundred and fifty lines. The only known MS. was burnt in the fire at the Cotton Library, after the poem had been copied by Thomas Hearne, and printed by him as prose at the end of his edition of the Chronicle of John of Glastonbury.

#### *The Death of Byrhtnoth.*

The poet tells how Byrhtnoth trained his bands, and how the herald of the Vikings came with threats demanding gold for peace, but Byrhtnoth raised his buckler, spook his spear, and made resolute answer. The warriors marched to the estuary (of the Blackwater at Maldon, in Essex), but the inflowing tide divided them. They waited, impatient, for the ebb. Then, when the tide suffered it, a bridge was made and defended, the invaders were allowed to cross the ford, and Byrhtnoth shouted



across the cold river, "Warriors, hear! Free space is given you; come quickly over as men to the battle! God only knows which of us shall be masters of the slaughter-field." They came and the hour was come when the fated warriors should fall. Wulfmær, Byrhtnoth's sister's son, was mangled with the battle-axe. A Danish chieftain, advancing against Byrhtnoth, wounded him with his spear, and fell under the Earl's stroke. Again Byrhtnoth was wounded by a dart that the boy Wulfmær plucked from his flesh. Hurling it back he laid low with it him who had too surely reached his lord. One came to plunder Byrhtnoth, but was beaten off by the wounded Earl with his battle-axe. But then his large-hilted sword dropped from his hand, he could no longer stand firmly on his feet. He looked heavenward and prayed for his soul. The heathen bands mangled his body, and cut down the youths, Ælfnoth and Wulfmær, who stood by it. Then fled from the fight those who durst no longer stay, Godric, son of Odda, first to fly, though he had ever shared the goods of his chieftain; he and his brother Godwy fled to the woods. But dauntless warriors desired to avenge their leader. Alfwine, young in years, bravely encouraged them. Offa supported him with words of shame against the coward Godric, whose flight, for he rode so noble horse in the fight, had been mistaken by many a man for that of the chief himself, and therefore was their host dispersed. Leofsuna wedged himself not to retire one step from the field, he would die in arms, and rushed forth, raging to the fight again. Dunnere brandished his spear, shouted to all the host that they should avenge Byrhtnoth. Æscferth, Edward the tall chief, Offa, suddenly cut down in the fight, joined again in the crashing of bucklers. The aged Byrhtwold counselled them on. "I am old, yet will I not stir hence." Godric, not he who had fled, cheered them on, rushing with the foremost he poured forth his darts and sped his death spear against the pirates."<sup>1</sup> . . .

So in the heat of conflict we part from them, for here the fragment ends.

There is yet one fragment more of a true poem. A few lines written in the margin of a volume of Homilies,<sup>2</sup> in the East Anglian dialect, apparently the latest verse of the Anglo-Saxon period,<sup>3</sup> represent gloomy and pitiless Death forcing en man in cruel detail, all the circumstances of his triumph.

#### *The Grave.*

*Death speaks to Man.* "For thee was a house planned ere thou wert born; for thee ground was appointed ere thou camest of thy mother. It is not

<sup>1</sup> There is a full prose translation of this poem, and of the next on the Grave (but very inaccurate) in Conybeare's Illustrations. I have here rather described the substance of Byrhtnoth than expressed its spirit.

<sup>2</sup> Bodleian MSS. NE. F. 4, 12.

yet prepared, nor its depth measured, it is not yet seen how long it may be for thee. When they shall bring me thee to where thou shalt be, I shall measure thee and the earth afterwards. Thy house is not highly built, it is low and hateful when thou liest in it; the heelways are low, the sideways low, the roof is built full-nigh thy breast; so thou shalt dwell in earth full cold, dim and dark. That den rots on your hand. Doorless is that house, and dark it is within; there thou art fast prisoner, and death holds the key. Loathly is that earth-house and grim to dwell in; there thou shalt dwell and worms shall part thee. Thus thou art laid and most hateful to thy friends; thou hast no friend that will come to thee, and who will ever inquire how that house liketh thee, who shall ever open the door for thee and come down after thee, for soon thou becomest loathly and hateful to look upon. [For soon is thy head bereft of hair; albeit its locks scatter beauty, none will with clasp of finger stroke it!]"

But the Anglo-Saxon mind did not flinch from the gloom of the grave. Beyond that narrow way the Anglo-Saxons <sup>The Anglo-Saxon Gospels.</sup> looked to the eternal mansion, of which it is but the small wicket-gate through which men pass in to their home from the day's labour in their Master's vineyard. When, after many years, the English mind was shaking off Rome-bred delusions, and was taking the pure Gospel to its heart, the example of our ancient Church was set forth in an edition of the Anglo-Saxon version of the Four Gospels, issued in 1571, by Archbishop Matthew Parker, with a dedication to Queen Elizabeth, by Foxe, the martyrologist. That edition was made from a copy in the decaying Saxon of the Anglo-Norman times. The second edition was from an earlier copy; but in each case the Gospels, in the language of the land, are divided into portions for appointed days, so arranged as to secure the public reading of them, without reservation or clouk of an unknown tongue, by the Anglo-Saxon clergy to their people.

<sup>2</sup> This is added in another handwriting.

<sup>3</sup> Printed at Dordrecht in 1665, and edited by Dr. Marshall, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, together with the Gothic version that had been given by Junius. The text of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels—*Tha Halgan Godspel on Englice*—has been also recently edited by Mr. Benjamin Thorpe.

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